

READER



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THIS WEEK'S COVER

How many people, places, and things do you spot?

It's become a Reader tradition for illustrator **JASON WYATT FREDERICK** to draw detailed, immersive, and wonderfully punny cartoon overviews of the Pitchfork Music Festival for the cover of our fest-week issue. This year his illustration reflects more of the weekend's cultural offerings: not just Pitchfork but also ComplexCon Chicago and the Silver Room Block Party.

For more of Frederick's work, go to cargocollective.com/jwfrederick.



CITY LIFE

FERAL CITIZEN

In praise of sweat and preservation

It's time to let our hands remember what our ancestors knew.

By **NANCE KLEHM**



Dried homegrown Bartlett pears © NANCE KLEHM

Summer is a time for us to celebrate our bodies and their metabolisms. We can expect the summers to be hot, and, just like many people around the world and in generations past and a few by ecological choice or economic need, find relief in fans, open windows, breezy stoops, the shade of trees, and cool drinks.

Our skin is the largest organ of our body and is porous (literally) to our environment, both containing what we need and expelling what we don't. Spending a lot of time outdoors allows one to acclimatize to seasonal shifts in temperature and humidity. Allowing one's body to sweat cleans the pores, facilitates skin-cell regeneration, helps process alcohol and air-borne pollutants, keeps your skin's microbiome protected, and, yes, helps others near us meet our pheromones. Dig it.

So with our outer microbiome staying healthy in this hot weather, we can support our inner one as well. Loads of fresh herbs, veggies, and fruit, grown in real soil with real sun and real rain, grow into our gardens, come to the farmers' markets, and manifest in our urban wildlands and parks. It's time to gather the good stuff and do some preserving or you will find yourself eating food grown indoors in greenhouses or on farms and orchards located in the southern hemisphere or other faraway places.

I want to stick to two passive means of food preservation, drying and simple fermenting, as they both take advantage of the season, especially in nonacclimatized homes. This is the tip of the melting iceberg. These preservation processes are best in non-air-conditioned houses and apartments, on back porches, outdoors in the backyard, on a window ledge, or in a car. (Yes, I said car.) When you find something particularly tasty at a market or stumble upon it on a walk, gather a bit extra with preserving in mind.

Drying

When you dry something down, you don't want it gummy or even bendable (unless it's fruit—then some flexibility is fine). Depending on what it is, you want what you are drying to crumble or snap. When it's leaves or flowers, I put small amounts of what I want to dry down in paper bags and crimp them shut. Or I put them in folded sheets of newspaper so they form a sort of envelope and attach them with paper clips or tape and hang them from a clothesline to dry. Drying must not be done in light, which will bleach and deplete the quality of what you are drying. The paper keeps dust off and allows some air flow.

If drying fruits or vegetables, I put thin slices on a window screen or string them like ➔

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CITY LIFE

continued from 3

old-timey popcorn strings, making sure each wheel of zucchini or green bean or whatever has some air flow space between them. Fruit is trickier without a dehydrator, especially berries and more juice-heavy fruits in humid climates. Unless these quickie rain showers and summer thunderstorm cease, fruit might be better to ferment at this time.

One of the best solar ovens is a car. We know not to leave kids or pets in vehicles on a day over 70 degrees, not even with the windows cracked while we dash into a store or run an errand. But in this case, I am advocating you use one for what it is this time of year: a mobile hot box. Again, take small amounts of herbs, leaves, and flowers in bags or newspaper envelopes and park your vehicle in a nice sunny location. Toss your bags onto the dashboard or seat, roll up the windows, and return after the sun has gone down. Presto—dried tasty treats, herbal teas, instant soup mix for your next camping trip, and preserved cooking ingredients to remind us of our abundant and beautiful place in the Great Lakes in the still cold of winter.

Summer temperatures activate bacteria, yeasts, and molds, meaning compost piles are more active and we merely need to set up a habitat they like and let the microbes happily do their job. Here are a pair of home fermentation projects to keep your inner microbiome working.

Critical Reflections on Capitalist China: a talk by Richard Gilman-Opalsky

Richard Gilman-Opalsky, Professor of political theory and philosophy at the University of Illinois at Springfield and author of *Specters of Revolt* (Repeater Books, 2016), shares reflections from his 2018 China Lectures at Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an.



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Fermentation

TEPACHE

This is a fruit-scrap vinegar process using pineapple rinds, but it can be applied to any fruit scraps you have left over. Tepache originates from Mexico.

Method: Enjoy an organic or well-washed nonorganic pineapple and save the rinds. Put the rinds in a bowl and add a cup of sugar or shaved *piloncillo* (a traditional raw, pressed sugar found in almost any Mexican grocery store). Cover with a half gallon of water, top with a cloth to keep the fruit flies out, and allow the bowl to sit at room temperature for 24 to 48 hours, until the liquid is frothy. Strain out the rind, pressing it to get the last flavor. Add cinnamon and clove to taste, and maybe a bit of chile de arbol or other fresh or dried chile. Drink over ice.

HOMEMADE YOGURT

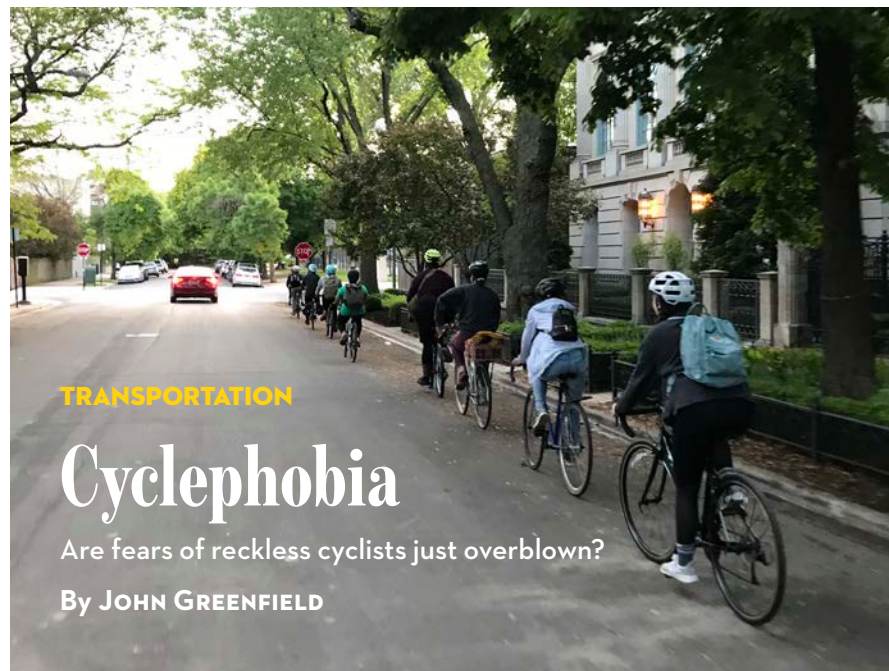
You'll need a thermometer for this one.

Method: Obtain a tablespoon of plain yogurt made without pectin or gelatin and with as many beneficial bacteria listed on the label as possible and leave out on the counter. Before bed, bring already pasteurized animal milk such as cow or goat to a gentle simmer without boiling for a few minutes (your milk is already pasteurized, so this is precautionary). Allow it to cool to between 80 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Pour it into a glass jar and add a dollop of the room-temperature yogurt to the jar. Give the mixture a quick stir with a non-metal spoon, cap the jar, and wrap it in a towel or sweatshirt. Wake up in the morning to find that your milk has been educated into yogurt.

Become porous to your environment and allow the summer heat in. If you get rocking on these countertop fermentation projects, I encourage you to keep going. Go beyond kombucha and kimchi, both fairly mainstream DIY projects, and expand into herbal-water kefir drinks, other fruit-scrap vinegars, fruit wines, yeasted breads with store-bought or wild-caught yeasts, simple farmer cheese, tempeh, and lacto pickles, as well as koji and miso.

Our grandparents and ancestors knew and practiced this stuff. It's time to let our hands remember. 

 @NanceKlehm



TRANSPORTATION

Cyclephobia

Are fears of reckless cyclists just overblown?

By JOHN GREENFIELD

Bike riders on Dickens Avenue  JOHN GREENFIELD

People are capable of acting like irresponsible idiots whether they're traveling on foot, by bicycle, or in a car. And obviously the potential for causing death and destruction is exponentially greater when you're piloting a high-speed, multiton vehicle.

But even a cycling advocate like me has to acknowledge that Riva Lehrer, 61, an artist and writer who teaches at SAIC and Northwestern, has had some truly awful luck when it comes to run-ins with selfish jerks on bikes.

"I have spina bifida and I wear giant orthopedic boots, and I walk with a very strong limp," Lehrer says. "But I try to go for long walks every day." However, Lehrer's disability makes it difficult to get out of the way when she encounters adults illegally riding at unsafe speeds on sidewalks in the Loop and along busy north-side streets like Clark, Broadway, and Sheridan.

Lehrer says that over the last 30 years she's had hundreds of near misses, and that sidewalk cyclists have struck her at least 25 times, resulting in knocked-out teeth, a split-open chin, broken fingers, and even a spinal cord injury. Appallingly, she reports, "not one of them stopped to see if I was OK."

Drivers have also hit Lehrer. For example, she says, once when she was walking her dog in Rogers Park, a motorist ran a stop

sign, knocking her over, and fled the scene. "But with drivers it's different, because you know you're in a danger zone." She adds that because bikes are relatively silent, she's often startled by sidewalk riders approaching her from behind.

Lehrer says that when she asks people not to pedal on the sidewalk, they'll sometimes reply that it's too dangerous to ride in the street, but often will just curse at her. She adds that her experiences with negligent bike riders have left her traumatized and bitter.

Her story is a reminder that, while bike-pedestrian crashes are less common and typically much less severe than the daily carnage inflicted by reckless drivers, they're no laughing matter. That's especially true for people with disabilities and seniors, for whom a fall is more likely to have serious consequences like a broken hip.

I learned about Lehrer after I posted on Facebook that, in my experience, many folks who don't bike regularly seem to have a primal fear of being struck by cyclists that's disproportionate to the potential danger, relative to the prevalence and severity of motor vehicle-pedestrian crashes.

This was on my mind after I witnessed the backlash to the city's proposal to build a traffic-calmed "neighborhood greenway" bike route on Dickens Avenue in Lincoln

CITY LIFE

Park. During a hearing on the project, several residents argued that more cycling on the side street would endanger families. They didn't seem to appreciate that the initiative would also include lowering the speed limit and installing sidewalk bump-outs and raised crosswalks, which would discourage speeding by drivers and make it easier to cross the street.

One neighbor actually argued that people move to Dickens to get away from bike traffic, drawing a round of applause. "How many bicyclists have killed or hurt pedestrians compared to drivers?" shot back another attendee.

While I've found no record of a bike rider ever fatally striking a pedestrian in Chicago in the modern era, drivers struck and killed 41 people on foot in Chicago in 2018, as well as five people biking, according to preliminary police data.

It's more difficult to compare the number of Chicago pedestrians hurt in bike crashes to the number injured in car crashes, because the police department doesn't track bike-pedestrian collisions. According to the Active Transportation Alliance's Chicago Regional Crash Report published last year, 2,710 people were injured while walking in the city in 2016. Since, according to Census data, only 1.7 percent of Chicagoans bike to work, it's a fair assumption that motorists struck the vast majority of those injured pedestrians.

New York City does track bike-pedestrian crashes, and the *New York Times* recently reported that in 2017 one pedestrian was killed in a bike collision, while 315 people on foot were injured. That same year, however, motorists fatally struck 107 people walking, and injured more than 15,000. Pedestrians were about 48 times as likely to be injured in a motor vehicle crash as in a bike collision.

"The small risk from bicycles pales in comparison to the deadly risk from cars and trucks," Marco Conner from the NYC advocacy group Transportation Alternatives told the *Times*. "There is a false picture that has been painted of cyclists pitted against pedestrians, whereas both cyclists and pedestrians are vulnerable road users."

Conner's counterpart Heather Schady from Active Trans says she's not convinced that Chicagoans are disproportionately afraid of being hit by cyclists compared to being struck by motorists: "In our experience people walking are most concerned about getting hit by drivers."

Schady notes that well-designed on-street bike lanes can improve safety for people walking by helping cyclists feel comfortable staying off the sidewalk. She added that creating separate paths for pedestrians and bike riders on off-street trails, as was recently done on the Lakefront Trail, can help prevent conflicts.

I asked Joe Ferrari, a DePaul psychology professor who studies social interactions, about my hypothesis that noncyclists like the Dickens residents may be unduly afraid of being struck and injured by people biking. "Fear of being hit is a legitimate and real fear," he says. "It's fine if it makes you cautious, but don't base your fear on perceptions or misconceptions, base it on facts."

Ferrari suggests that the city could reassure the Dickens neighbors by providing before-and-after collision data from existing neighborhood greenways that show safety has improved. A Chicago Department of Transportation spokesperson said last week that CDOT is currently analyzing the crash stats and will present them at a community meeting later this summer.

Ferrari adds that people who don't bike may tend to "other" cyclists, as well as view being struck by a person astride a bike as a more personal affront than being hit by a metal box that happens to contain a driver. "People perceive the bicyclist as being the motor, the steering, and the brake, so that's an understandable emotion."

The bottom line seems to be, although motor vehicle crashes are a much greater threat to pedestrians than bike collisions in terms of numbers and the potential for serious or fatal injuries, people who bike should take noncyclists' safety concerns seriously and show some empathy for their fears, even if they aren't always realistic.

And, of course, we who ride bicycles also need to do our part to avoid endangering others. So if you're a person who bikes on city sidewalks for any significant distance, at anything much faster than walking speed, please ride like an adult and use the street instead.

"I'm not antibike," Riva Lehrer says. "Bike lanes are great—they add predictability. For years I even dated someone who did competitive cycling. But at this point, when I see a biker on the sidewalk, all I feel is rage and hatred, and I don't want to feel that way anymore." ■

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NEWS & POLITICS



EPA project officer Loreen Targos and the banner she unfurled in protest. © NICOLE CANTELLO

POLITICS

President polluter

Chicago EPA employees defend the environment from Trump.

By **BEN JORAVSKY**

Ever since he waddled into office three years ago, President Trump has been waging war against the environment, and the union of federal employees who are trying to protect it.

Last week the union fought back.

Ladies and gentlemen, meet Loreen Targos, an Environmental Protection Agency project officer in the Chicago office who had the guts to—well, we'll get to what Targos had the guts to do.

But first, Trump's war on the environment.

He has, among other things, opened up federal land to oil and gas drilling, lifted limits on coal mining leases, redefined what water bodies are in order to make it easier for companies to pollute them, and attempted to prevent states like California from setting their own limits on auto emissions.

I'm sure I left something out of that list. Oh, yes, he pulled out of the Paris Agreement to combat global warming, which he dismisses as a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese.

That's your president, America.

It's gotten so bad that the beaches of western Florida have been paralyzed by the red tide, a noxious algae bloom caused in part by warming water temps.

Ordinarily, Trump and his Republican allies would say "so what?" to something like the red tide, but it's sort of like that shark that haunted the beaches of Massachusetts in *Jaws*: it's scaring off the tourists!

Trump's pollsters had to break the bad news that if he didn't do something—anything—he could lose Florida, a key swing state, in the 2020 election.

Moreover, their internal polls showed that swing-voting millennials and women needed

NEWS & POLITICS

some sort of assurance that Trump actually cares about the environment or they might be tempted to vote Democratic. (Apparently older white men would vote for Trump even if he was caught dumping red algae into the ocean.)

So on July 8, Trump called the press to the White House, where he delivered a one-hour ode to himself for having made the environment great again.

I'd say that swing-state millennials and women are too smart to fall for this. Except I watched Chicagoans reelect Mayor Rahm in 2015, so, really, when it comes to voters—anything's possible.

Curiously enough, Trump delivered his environmental speech on the very day he launched another salvo at EPA employees by imposing a settlement in their contract negotiations.

Trump says the EPA union—represented by the American Federation of Government Employees—has been recalcitrant in negotiations. The union says it's the other way around, that Trump's the recalcitrant one.

My instinct is to side with the union—c'mon, even MAGA hat wearers must concede Trump's not exactly a truth teller.

But put that issue to the side. Where did Trump's lawyers study contract law? No credible law professor in the country would say it's legal for one side to unilaterally impose a new contract on the other side in the middle of negotiations.

OK, maybe Alan Dershowitz might say it's OK since he's fallen in love with Trump. But I said credible law professor.

By the way, EPA employees are not the only federal workers victimized by Trump's curious interpretation of contract law. His administration pulled the same stunt with employees at the Veterans Administration, the Department of Education, and the Social Security Administration.

In the case of the EPA, Trump has taken away employees' rights to file a grievance regarding a punishment, and he's forced presidents of local unions to return to their regular federal jobs.

Ordinarily, the presidents of governmental locals are allowed to go on the equivalent of leave during their terms, giving them time to work full-time for the union.

It would be as though Mayor Lightfoot had ordered Fraternal Order of Police president Kevin Graham to walk a beat or CTU president Jesse Sharkey to go back to teaching history

at Senn High School because she felt negotiations were dragging on too long.

"It's union busting—plain and simple," says Nicole Cantello, the president of AFGE Local 704, which represents about 1,000 EPA employees in the midwest.

The federal unions have filed appeals to the appropriate federal bureaucratic entities. Eventually, they're hoping, the authorities will dismiss Trump's contract imposition as illegal and force the administration to return to the negotiating table.

But those appeals may take weeks to adjudicate. "Trump doesn't care if imposing a contract is illegal," says Cantello. "He says, 'I'm doing it—stop me!'"

While this contract battle was going down, Targos was among several employees invited to Washington to receive an award for "superior service" from EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler.

As a project officer out of the Chicago office, Targos helped oversee the restoration of the wetlands contaminated by oil spills at the Zephyr Oil Refinery in Muskegon, Michigan. Targos decided she couldn't receive the award in good conscience without speaking out. So, on July 10, after walking across the stage and shaking hands and posing for pictures with Wheeler, she made her move.

"We were standing onstage making small talk," she says. "He said he was the only EPA administrator to swim in the Great Lakes. I'm thinking, 'That can't be true.' Then I said, 'I have a question for you—do you support fair contracts?'"

With that, she pulled out a banner she'd been concealing in the front of her pants and unfurled it while she stood onstage next to Wheeler. It read: "I care about EPA workers having a fair contract to address public health & climate change. Do you?"

Like I said—badass move.

So far, EPA officials have not punished Targos for her protest. But I wouldn't be surprised if they did. And having eradicated the contract provision that allows employees to file a grievance against punishment, they might feel they can get away with it.

"We're going to have to stay vigilant," says Cantello.

If only Trump was as tough on polluters as he is with federal employees, maybe there wouldn't be a red tide of noxious algae scaring off the tourists in Florida. 🦋

🐦 @joravben

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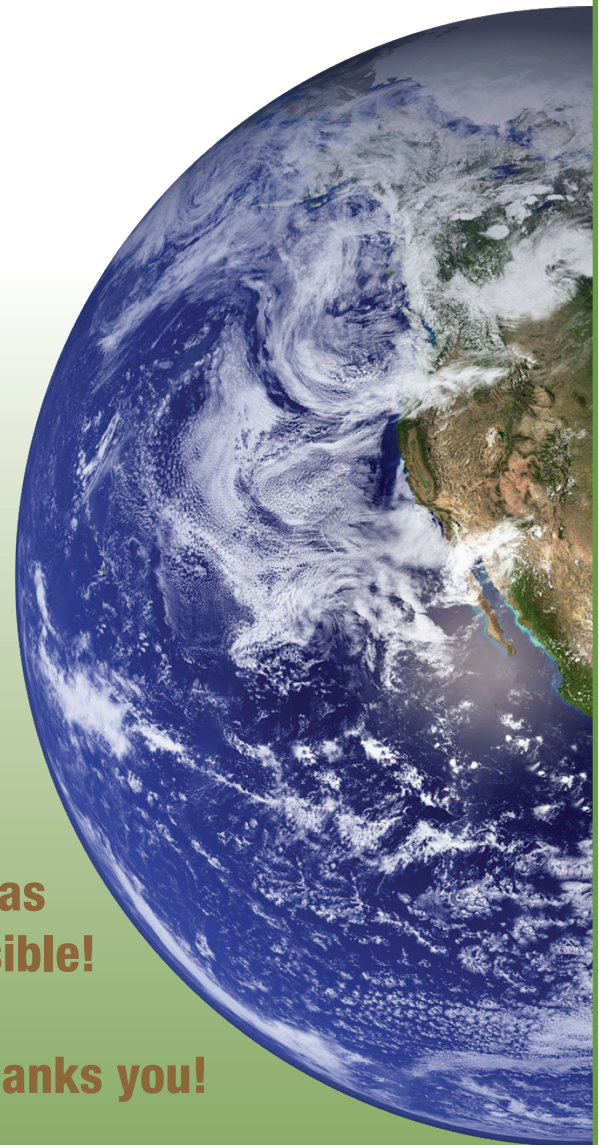
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RESTAURANT REVIEW

Mom's at Politan Row turns the table on Japanese 'Western food'

Chefs Randi Howry and Kelly Ijichi tap a nostalgia in the making.

By MIKE SULA



Happy potatoes 📷 SANDY NOTO

I promise I'm not just going to write about food hall vendors for the rest of my life, but this summer it feels like I could. Much more so than the three-year-old Revival Food Hall, which largely enlisted established chefs and concepts, the folks behind the three-month-old Politan Row have tapped into promising and unsung local kitchen talent.

Their achievement is even more remarkable considering that Politan Row is a chain consisting of (for now) four food halls in three major U.S. cities that began with New Orleans's Saint Roch Market just over four years ago.

But it was a local, Margaret Pak, of Politan Row Chicago's Keralite Thattu, who clued management in to Randi Howry and Kelly Ijichi, two chefs who have worked and lived together off and on since 2016, when they met while working at MFK.

Howry and Ijichi hooked up with Pak through the couple's pop-up series Hungry as F*ck, where they originated the dish that would give birth to Mom's: deep-fried Spam musubi, a Hawaiian snack of sushi rice and Spam wrapped in nori. It's just one of Howry and Ijichi's tributes to what they call Japanese comfort food. But in some ways it's a full-circle embodiment of *yoshoku*—a branch of Japanese cuisine that adapts Western dishes—which could arguably be traced back to the mid 19th century. Now characterized by



Fried Spam musubi with spicy mayo 📷 SANDY NOTO



Big cream puff with purple ube cream
📷 SANDY NOTO

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Kelly Ijichi and Randi Howry SANDY NOTO

dishes like Okinawa taco rice, *kare raisu* (curry rice), and *omurice* (rice omelet), yoshoku was cultural appropriation back when it was cool.

Spam wasn't around back then, but that's when red meat became legal in Japan, which made possible *tonkatsu*, the crunchy, panko-breaded pork cutlet drenched in brown Worcestershire-spiked sauce. Its descendant is the katsu sando, a katsu between two cottony white squares of *shokupan*, aka Japanese milk bread, swiped with the sauce and given vegetal crunch with chopped raw cabbage. In the last year or so, cheffy interpretations of this Japanese convenience-store standby have been appearing all over the country.

Judging by Instagram, Howry and Ijichi's katso sando is one of the stars of the food hall. In cutaway, it certainly arrests the eyeballs, and all one's attention once in the mouth—two cirrus clouds sandwiching a strata of Sichuan-chile-spiked mayo, acidic tsukemono-style pickled cucumbers, cool shredded cabbage, pea greens, and hot, crunchy pork.

Howry and Ijichi planned to bake the softly sweet, spongy milk bread in-house, but demand wouldn't allow it. Instead they make several trips each week to the Korean Crescent Bakery in the Assi Plaza in Niles, where it's baked every day. A plan to make soba noodles from scratch was set aside as well, but it's hard to tell that the cool, slippery buckwheat

noodles they serve are a commercial brand, particularly if on one of our punishingly hot recent afternoons you've dipped them into their limpid, chilled dashi, sparked by grated wasabi and ginger, and more pickles.

The chefs do roll the dough every few days for their house-made udon noodles—fat, springy, square tentacles they press out ➔

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continued from 9

over a stringed Italian chitarra pasta maker, then serve in hot dashi with a slice of soy-mirin-sake-marinated beef short rib, crunchy tempura crumbs, and a jiggling soft-boiled egg that begs to leak its golden interior into the brew.

Like many of the vendors at Politan, Howry and Ijichi have a tightly focused menu, and nearly everything on it is essential eating. Dipped in togarashi-sriracha mayo, the Spam musubi is an Insta-ready riot of textures and flavors: fatty, snappy, salty, crunchy, and soft all at the same time. Sweetly roasted “happi potatoes,” drizzled with Kewpie mayo and tonkatsu barbecue sauce and topped with a dancing wave of shaved bonito flakes, are a tuberous take on the street pancake known as *okonomiyaki*, while the chefs’ version of *gomae*, often a dense, murky spinach-sesame salad, is a market-driven rogue, in July broccoli tossed with sweet and nutty sesame sauce and a crunchy black-sesame brittle spiked with a tingling dash of togarashi.

A trio of pastries beckons from under glass: a small football of panko-fried milk bread that contains a core of savory vegetable curry; a square of chewy, mildly sweet coconut-butter mochi that in some ways resembles a Saint Louis gooey butter cake; and a big, flaky cream puff that is meant to rotate flavors but for now, by popular demand, is filled with purple ube cream.

The succulents in Spam cans for sale by the counter signal another form of nostalgia from Howry and Ijichi’s pop-up days—which they say aren’t over. But they’ve also talked for years about opening a Japanese-style diner, which if it happens—and they say it will—would be a brand-new form of yoshoku. **R**

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THEATER

Steppenwolf’s revival of *True West* isn’t a nostalgia trip

Sam Shepard’s play put the company on the map, but this production points the way to a diverse future.

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

If you’ve been banging around the Chicago theatrosphere longer than 25 seconds, you know the myth of *True West* and how Sam Shepard’s bro-ly, brawly mano a mano tale helped the ragtag

off-off-Loop Steppenwolf Theatre burst into public consciousness with its 1982 production starring Gary Sinise, John Malkovich, and Francis Guinan.

It was the first Steppenwolf show to go to New York, and it helped launch the fabled/clichéd “muscular” school of Chicago theater, wherein sweaty working-class guys emoted until furniture broke and real blood ran. It was, for its time, revolutionary: Steppenwolf the bad-boy upstart Mozart playing against the august Goodman’s Haydn.

Revisiting the red-meat drama for the first time in 37 years is a suave marketing move, especially given Guinan’s return to the same role he played way back in the day. It also results in a production that’s impossible to take your eyes off.

As brothers with a lethal score to settle in a tale of biblical cowboy proportions, Namir Smallwood and Jon Michael Hill defy easy

description. Suffice it to say that, if you missed Steppenwolf’s first coming, fret not. This announces its second.

It’s not that *True West* isn’t without significant problems. Shepard’s one female character behaves in a way so unlikely it feels like she must be overmedicated. Only a horse ton of valium could elicit a reaction of such calm in someone facing wanton invasion and destruction. There’s a missing offstage father who gets a better narrative. As for “Mom,” the magnificent Jacqueline Williams manages against all odds to instill the play’s only unnamed character with dignity.

That irksome caveat aside, Randall Arney’s production is a mesmerizing showcase for Hill, an ensemble member since 2007, and Smallwood, who joined a decade later. There is also a healthy dose of Guinan, who’s been with Steppenwolf for 40 years, as the shady Hollywood producer Saul Kimmer.

But make no mistake. This is Hill and Smallwood’s show. Their chemistry crackles like a live wire draped across the third rail. Even in their silences, you can sense the fuse scorching closer toward detonation.

True West is filled with references to the myth of the American west, right down to the cacti. It takes place as brothers Austin (Hill) and Lee (Smallwood) are holed up in their mother’s southwestern home. Austin is a successful, Ivy League-educated screenwriter with a wife, kids, and a mortgage. He even wears a tie while working at his typewriter in the kitchen.

Lee, by comparison, is the ragged renegade: aggressive, violent, hard-drinking, dubiously lawful, and viciously resentful of his brother. They are a late-1970s Western Cain and Abel,

THEATER

with Shepard even throwing in multiple references to the nearby town of Paradise lest the symbolism escape us.

The casting breathes new life into the script. Lee and Austin are both Black men in a rural western setting, around 40 years ago. When they talk about standing out like a “sore thumb” or getting “picked up” for merely walking around, there’s an ominousness that doesn’t exist when white men play the roles.

On a less somber but still culturally loaded note, Hill eviscerates the John Wayne mystique with his ridiculously accurate impression of the fake cowboy who embodied straight white macho privilege for far too many decades. His Al Jolson reference, meanwhile, contains the venom of a rattler.

As their time together lengthens, the brothers begin mirroring each other in mannerisms, dress, and drinking habits until they’ve merged into knife-blade refractions of each other. Hill and Smallwood make the tiniest gestures immensely telling, whole worlds being conveyed in the tug of a glove or fingers pinching the bridge of a nose. The authenticity

is there in the operatic violence and shattering gestures as well, from Lee’s Shiva-worthy search for a writing instrument to Austin’s curdled disdain for his father.

Shepard’s mix of biblical and western themes is vivid as a clear day’s sunset, thanks in part to Steppenwolf’s lush design team. Ann G. Wrightson’s dusk-to-dawn lighting, the howling coyotes and maimed prey in Richard Woodbury’s sound design, and Todd Rosenthal’s home-and-desert set combine to romanticize the Great American West even as Ned Mochel’s bruising fight choreography tracks its destruction.

K. Todd Freeman was Steppenwolf’s sole African American ensemble member from 1993 until 2007, when the company added five artists of color (Hill among them). In the ensuing 12 years, the company has diversified further, both in its ensemble and its programming. In going back to the past with *True West*, Steppenwolf reveals a future that’s bright—and decidedly nonmonochromatic. **A**

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THEATER

OPENING

Too much weight

Bury Me suffocates its characters with thematic overload.

Dandelion Theatre presents the world premiere of Brynne Frauenhoffer's plaintive, often overloaded exploration of family and identity, directed by Ben Kaye. When expectant parents Josh (David Stobbe) and Michelle (Gabriela Diaz) leave Chicago to visit Josh's small Missouri hometown, a powder keg of hot-button issues goes off.

Josh's teenage half sister (K. Holland) is wrestling with gender identity and at constant loggerheads with their mother, who grudgingly agrees to call them "Ru" rather than Ruth. Josh's stepfather is dying of cancer, and, due to a groaningly coincidental fender bender, Josh reconnects with his first love, whose five-year-old daughter may be his. It's a lot of plot to keep straight, intertwined with frequent Bible passage references, Trump name checks, and abortion-debate talking points.

It is admirable and ambitious for Frauenhoffer to tackle so many heavy themes, but their weight overwhelms the thinly written characters she's created to carry the load. The two men are especially two-dimensional, a collection of clichéd traits rather than full-fledged human beings. The best moments in this play occur during heart-to-heart exchanges between characters who are not men. Ru, who explains to their mother that they are neither man nor woman, says to think of them as their mother thinks of angels—beings not defined by their sex. Ru's journey would have been more than enough for an entire narrative; instead they are a supporting character in a sprawling story bent on addressing too many topics at once. Frauenhoffer's intellect and feeling for this material is obvious. I just wish she'd let her people breathe now and then. —**DMITRY SAMAROV** **BURY ME** Through 7/28: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 4 PM, Rivendell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge, 773-349-2342, dandeliontheatre.com, \$28.

Killer comic chops

David Cerda's **The Drag Seed** gives a classic but creaky film a genderqueer makeover.

David Cerda's camp parody of Mervyn LeRoy's 1956 film *The Bad Seed*, about a murderous, extremely narcissistic child, takes drag to a new level, working as both a hilarious send-up of a creaky but beloved old movie (itself adapted from Maxwell Anderson's 1954 Broadway hit and William March's award-winning novel) and as an engrossing, entertaining story on its own. Cerda transfers the setting from mid-20th-century America to today, and transforms the dramatis personae from a bunch of stiff upper-middle-class cis squares (plus a few on the fringe) to a panoply of LGBTQ+ characters, some in drag, some not. In Cerda's version, the murderous child is no longer a willful eight-year-old girl but a charming yet spoiled genderqueer named Carson who dreams of glory on *RuPaul's Drag Race* and will destroy anyone who gets in their way (played with exquisite comic timing by Kristopher Bottrall).

Cerda's play bristles with great one-liners, and the production, under the direction of Cheryl Snodgrass, is packed with superb comic actors. Ed Jones plays Carson's sweet, oblivious mother, a woman who, as in the film, takes way too long to figure out her child is a killer. Fans of the original movie will especially enjoy Elizabeth Lesinski's only slightly exaggerated caricature

of Eileen Heckart's turn as the boozy mother of the "bad seed's" victim. Keith Ryan's wonderful wig design tops it all off. —**JACK HELBIG** **THE DRAG SEED** Through 8/24: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark, 800-838-3006, handbagproductions.org, \$27-\$44 in advance, \$30 at door.

Vive la résistance!

A touring production of **Les Misérables** brings home a timely lesson.

Given its blockbuster history, it may be hard to remember that, despite packed houses, *Les Misérables* got terrible reviews on its 1985 London opening (though American critics adored it on Broadway in 1987). Song for memorable song, Claude-Michel Schönberg's music and Alain Boublil and Jean-Marc Natel's lyrics (translated into English by Herbert Kretzmer) still inspire more than 30 years later, in part due to evergreen themes of love, duty, and redemption. (All that fuss over a loaf of bread!)

As Jean Valjean, Nick Cartell brings a showstopping tenor to "Who Am I?" and "Bring Him Home" opposite antagonist Josh Davis's Inspector Javert, whose powerful intensity reflects a passion for justice that's warped into vengeance. Both men seek salvation, yet only one achieves it. As the Thénardiens, the conniving husband-and-wife innkeepers, Jimmy Smagula and Allison Guinn unexpectedly steal the show. Paige Smallwood (Éponine) slays with "On My Own." The entire ensemble, including the children (gotta love theater kids), gets the audience pumped for revolution.

Laurence Connor's staging for this touring production is dazzlingly dynamic, with Matt Kinley's set and image design moving the action from the Paris slums to the makeshift barricade, complemented by Paul Constable's intense lighting design that highlights the tension with moving spots and well-timed flashes. *Les Miz* is certainly melodramatic, yet the story touches on many all-too-human issues: finding one's purpose, the fear of losing a child, and the struggles of untrained marginalized people to fight for a better place in the world. Many of the characters make a conscious decision to risk everything for a noble cause, a timely lesson for those eager for change. —**JOSH FLANDERS** **LES MISÉRABLES** Through 7/27: Wed 2 and 7:30 PM, Thu-Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 2 and 8 PM, Sun 2 PM; also Thu 7/25, 2 PM, Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph, 800-775-2000, broadwayinchicago.com, \$35-105.

Recommending *The Recommendation*

Windy City Playhouse's latest immersive production is not to be missed.

Two college guys, unlike in privilege, in Providence, where we lay our scene. From minor grudge erupt in mutiny, where private cause makes public baths unclean. Iskinder Iodouku (Michael Aaron Pogue) is mixed race (Ethiopian father, white mother, Black in the United States). Aaron Feldman (Julian Hester) is "white as the sky is when you die" (ultrarich Brentwood lawyer father is all you need to know). Assigned as roommates at Brown University, Izzy and Felly overlook their minor differences—what's a few extra inches of luxury memory foam between friends?—to become party royalty before heading west to start law school (Izzy) and a "career" in film (Felly). Except. Felly has a lot, has always had a lot,



Les Misérables

© MATTHEW MURPHY

and is so accustomed to the power a lot confers that he can't see what's wrong with himself and the world. And Izzy can't rub up against it without some of it rubbing off on him.

Windy City Playhouse's immersive ambulatory production of Jonathan Caren's *The Recommendation*, conceptualized by Amy Rubenstein and directed by Jonathan Wilson, balances on the razor's edge of hilarious excess and wrenching realism, guiding the audience from college dorm to sushi bar to jail cell (replete with beverages for most occasions) as the story twists and twists again. Carrying the suspense are stellar performances by Hester, Pogue, and Brian Keys (as convict Dwight Barnes), who reveal their characters with sympathy and complexity. This is a penetrating experience not to be missed. —**IRENE HSIAO** **THE RECOMMENDATION** Through 9/22: Wed-Thu 7:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 4 and 8 PM, Sun 2 and 6 PM, Windy City Playhouse, 3014 W. Irving Park, 773-891-8985, windycity-playhouse.com, \$80-\$100.

Loon lake

Cloudgate Theatre's **Strange Heart Beating** can't pump life into its preposterous plot points.

Atmosphere is everything in Cloudgate Theatre artistic director Kristin Idaszak's new *Strange Heart Beating*, in which a nameless midwestern town by a nameless lake becomes the disturbed burial ground for a variety of human ills—racism, alcoholism, factory farming, mob vigilantism, climate change, and the mysterious disappearance of many girls. In this heavy-handed production, the Lake (Stephanie Shum, in a fantastic ball gown of nets and weeds) is the first to speak of what she has witnessed—a girl, hands sticky with ice cream, egg-white substance between her legs, deposited in her waters. A loon is dispatched to deliver her soul. (The loons are important. Like the girls, they are never seen.)

This particular girl is Helen, the young daughter of Lena (Leah Raidt), who has grown up in this town where the mayor owns the plant in the next town over, and where the genetically modified turkeys slaughtered by undocumented migrant workers feed the (mostly) white inhabitants in every possible way. Her best friend, Teeny (Jyreika Guest), the sheriff and a Black woman in a white man's town of "outsiders" and folks "from here," is considering possible culprits like Lena's evil ex, when she gets a series of messages from Lake, the loons, and Ramon (Brandon Rodriguez), whose parents were deported during an immigration raid decades earlier. Ramon notices strange happenings all around him, but as he says, "It isn't news when Brown girls go missing." The lighting design, by Kaili Story, is on point. The rest is precious and preposterous. —**IRENE HSIAO** **STRANGE HEART BEATING** Through 7/28: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun

5 PM, Mon 7:30 PM, the Frontier, 1106 W. Thorndale, Cloudgatetheatre.com, \$5-\$45 pay what you want in advance; free at the door based on availability.

Father and child reunion

Sunset Baby shows the personal price for political strife.

Nina (Jazzma Pryor) and her estranged father, Kenyatta (Marc A. Rogers), a former activist in the Black Liberation Movement, face a volatile reunion following the death of her mother in Dominique Morisseau's stunning play. He comes seeking access to valuable letters his wife wrote to him while he was incarcerated, but also to repair his relationship with Nina. Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre's production, directed by Tim Rhoze, is driven by the passion of the three actors, who together embody the characters' desires to transcend their circumstances. For Nina, the political actions of her parents are deeply personal; she is hardened in the wake of a childhood lost to violence and injustice. Although her life is not centered around a social movement, she, like her parents, is stuck in a cycle of struggling for survival. Nina and her boyfriend, Damon (Jordan Gleaves), have turned to robbery, a life her parents' work sought to keep her from. But behind her tough exterior, she is desperate for peace. Pryor holds a firm command on Nina's turbulent emotional state and successfully invites the audience to understand the complexities and vulnerabilities behind the mask she presents to the world. Gleaves and Rogers also offer highly impressive performances as men whose lives share startling parallels in their relationship to love and parenthood. —**KATIE POWERS** **SUNSET BABY** Through 7/28: Sat 7 PM, Sun 3 PM; Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre at Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, 847-866-5914, cityofevanston.org, \$20.

Bearing witness

About Face Youth Theatre's 20/20 offers a clear vision of queer life, past and present.

About Face Youth Theatre's company-created work explores the lives of LGBTQ young people past, present, and future. Under the direction of About Face artistic director Megan Carney and teaching artist Donny Acosta, the 12-member ensemble of writer-performer-activists ages 13 to 23 draw on their own experiences—as well as the stories of former AFYT members going back to the youth program's creation 20 years ago—to offer what they rightly describe as "a contemporary look at recent queer history."

Designers Pauline Olesky (set), Claire Sangster (lights), and Ariel Zetina (sound) have transformed the Center on Halsted's cozy Hoover-Leppen Theatre into a dance club where pumping music and flashing lights

THEATER

provide a rousing and immersive party atmosphere. “In this ballroom, we give you the chance to be the things the world tells you not to be,” declares the show’s charismatic emcee, self-described “Filipino trans goddess” Angelica Grace. For 75 intermissionless minutes, the performers offer spoken and sung testimony about their own lives and the lives of those who came before them. As one cast member puts it, “Bearing witness to someone else’s truth is an opportunity to assess our own truth.”

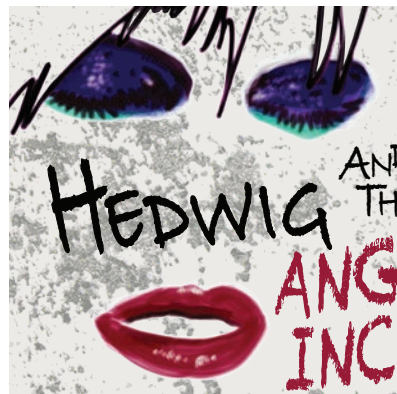
The mood is sometimes elegiac (as when the talk turns to AIDS or suicide) but mostly celebratory. The memories are joyous and painful, humorous and angry, sexy and shy—and always honest and authentic. The dozen cast members are talented and poised. More important, they are brave, curious, intelligent, and eloquent. 20/20 is powerful stuff. —**ALBERT WILLIAMS**
20/20 Through 7/28: Fri-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, 773-784-8565, aboutfacetheatre.com, \$20 or pay what you can.

RRPack mentality

An adopted child seeks survival through lupine identity in *Wolf Play*.

Never doubt the emotional layers possible from an expertly crafted, exquisitely manipulated puppet. In

the right hands, cloth and carved wood can undergo an alchemy that renders them sentient. Or at least, lulls you into the belief that they are so. That’s what happens in Hansol Jung’s intriguing 90-minute drama, directed by Jess McLeod. At the heart of *Wolf Play* is Wolf himself (Dan Lin), an eight-year-old Korean adoptee whose insistence that he is lupine allows him to survive, first in a family that decides to sell him on Yahoo, and next with Robin (Jennifer Glaspey), the lesbian who “buys” him without telling her child-averse partner, Ash (Isa Arciniegas). Jung never specifies the circumstances preceding Wolf’s adoption, but his attachment to the mammals with whom he shares a name make it clear he feels endangered around humans. Lin gives a smart, funny, ultimately wrenching performance, instilling Stephanie Diaz’s adorable, intricate puppet with a mix of childish naivete and feral cunning. It’s a performance that will make you ache for the world’s unwanted children and for those born to adults who barely know how to care for themselves, let alone their young dependents. At one point, Wolf explains that when an injured wolf is separated from the pack, the only thing his family can do is howl until the animal can follow their voices home. *Wolf Play* shows that human behavior isn’t all that different. —**CATEY SULLIVAN**
WOLF PLAY Through 8/18: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 2:30 PM, Gift Theatre, 4802 N. Milwaukee, 773-283-7071, thegifttheatre.org, \$40-\$45, \$35 seniors, \$20 students. 



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Ginger

FESTIVAL

Made in Chicago

The Windy City International Film Festival wants to introduce local moviemakers to the world.

By **MARISSA DE LA CERDA**

The Windy City International Film Festival (WCFF) returns this Friday to the Victory Gardens Biograph Theater in Lincoln Park. Now in its third year, the festival will feature 84 short films, four TV pilots, three feature films, and a program of staged screenplay readings over the course of four days.

Since it began in 2017, WCFF has shown films across a range of genres from all over the world, but a huge focus is placed on emphasizing the voices of Chicago filmmakers. “We launched the fest because there was a great need in Chicago for more local screening opportunities for our homegrown filmmakers,” says festival director Mindy Fay Parks.

She and programming director Josh Hope noticed the disparity in opportunities for local filmmakers when they entered the festival circuit in 2015 with *The Life and Death of an Unhappily Married Man*, a Chicago-made feature film that Hope wrote and directed and Parks acted in. “We screened at nearly 100 festivals but had a hard time finding a place to make

our Chicago premiere,” says Hope. “And we kept running into Chicago filmmakers on the road who had similar stories. We were seeing great Chicago-made indie films screening everywhere except Chicago.” With this in mind, Hope and Parks created their own festival that would give local filmmakers the opportunity to premiere their work here.

For this year’s festival, they, along with a screening committee of about a dozen people, watched and graded the submissions they received over the course of eight months and filled the festival program with a mix of films made in Chicago or by Chicago filmmakers.

Among them were two of the three feature films in this year’s festival. James C. and Melissa Boratyn’s *Ginger* follows a 23-year-old recent college graduate who, aside from dealing with career uncertainty and familial pressure to succeed, has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer. Sanghoon Lee’s *Banana Season* is the tale of the unique relationship between a little person and an MMA cage fighter.

The festival also includes three programs

of Chicago shorts curated by Hope and Parks, each speaking to a different theme. “Having a multigenre fest like ours makes it so fun and enjoyable to put blocks together with films that may be vastly different in genre but blend seamlessly together as a larger piece,” says Hope.

Volume one features films about identity, including Jennifer Stachovic’s animated short *Limbo*, which follows a lonely ghost trying to cross over by following a phantom limb, and Sammy Zeisel’s bloody coming-of-age story *The Care and Keeping of You*. Volume two is a series of films dealing with the formation of unlikely friendships, including Trevor Morgan’s *Ten Hours*, which follows a ride-share passenger and her driver on a ten-hour trip. The third volume which shines a light on human creativity, includes Mariah Woods’s *Redlining*, about a woman who takes the Red Line and encounters a variety of characters from both ends of the train’s route. There’s also C.A. Davis’s endearing *Roano Moreno’s Colorful Canvases*, the story of a starving artist attempting to rediscover himself through the lessons of his deceased father.

But Hope and Parks wanted to open the festival to a wider audience. “We took it a step further by becoming an international fest so that we could bring industry professionals into our city to broaden collaborations,” says Parks.

The international shorts are also organized by theme, like the Chicago shorts programs,

and are interspersed with films made in the U.S. They explore a wide range of subjects, from destinations to unlikely friendships to scientific exploration. From the Netherlands, there’s *Skogafass*, Niels Bourgonje’s complex depiction of mental health and motherhood. In *New Mars*, from the UK’s Susie Jones, a new generation living on Mars tries to avoid repeating the same destructive mistakes humans made on earth. Japan’s *Paleonaut* follows a scientist who is studying time travel but falls in love with her subject and will either have to connect with him across the years or lose him forever.

In addition to these heavier topics, there are lighthearted and comedic international selections. Sweden’s *How It Feels to Be Hungover* is the humorous tale of a man who wakes up in a clinic that specializes in curing hangovers and, in addition to receiving a prescription for ice cream and action movies, learns some news from the doctor that changes everything.

Following the spirit of the multigenre festival, WCFF also features several eccentric TV pilots. The neighbor comedy *5A5B* is about two best friends, a gay nerd in his 30s and a 50-year-old divorcee, and their search for love, jobs, and self-acceptance. *#Brown-BridgetMD* is an opposites-attract story that follows an awkward Indian American doctor who meets someone completely different from herself at a patient’s funeral. In the webseries *Neither Here Nor There*, a Chinese American ad executive tries to revolutionize sexual power dynamics through condom ads.

Aside from screenings, there will be other events for movie lovers and aspiring film professionals. On Friday morning Chicago actors perform readings of new screenplays while audience members enjoy free coffee and doughnuts. There will also be an educational happy hour and seminar on how to secure insurance for short-term film productions. The festival concludes with an awards ceremony and an encore presentation of more Chicago-made shorts at Navigator Taproom.

Hope and Parks are confident there’s something for all independent film lovers at the festival. If nothing else, WCFF has created a space for some of Chicago’s most underlooked filmmakers to showcase their work.

“The talent pool in Chicago is rich,” says Hope. “Local filmmakers are making amazing stuff, and we’re thrilled to provide a great place for them to show off their work in their hometown.” 📍

🐦 @marndel7

**LEAVING HOME, COMING HOME: A PORTRAIT
OF ROBERT FRANK ★★½**
Directed by Gerald Fox. 85 min.

PULL MY DAISY ★★★
Directed by Robert Frank and Alfred Leslie. 27
min. Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State, 312-
846 2800, siskelfilmcenter.org, \$12.

FILM



Robert Frank and June Leaf
COURTESY GREENWICH ENTERTAINMENT

REVIEW

Leaving Home, Coming Home, not really getting anywhere

A blurry portrait of photographer and filmmaker Robert Frank finally hits theaters.

By **ANDREA GRONVALL**

Not even ten minutes into director Gerald Fox's 2004 documentary *Leaving Home, Coming Home: A Portrait of Robert Frank*, the legendary photographer-collagist-filmmaker, then turning 80, explodes when the camera runs out of film again and he's asked to do another take. "Well, look, forget it! Look, I'm not an actor, you know? I can't go through this shit, you know? I mean, there's no spontaneity in this; it's completely against my nature, what's happening here. So, if the crew can't get it together with the film, let's go out to Coney Island . . . let's look at the landscape with my photographs, and see, this man is looking at something he did 50 years ago. Can you tell me, is that guy still around? I mean, this is shit, you know? I can't do it!"

Whether he is upset over working with amateurs, or all too aware that he's in the final quarter of his storied life (perhaps both), the

next cut is to a much less irascible Frank, as he roams the streets of Coney Island looking for a location that he shot 50 years ago, asking passersby if they can help him. His face reflects a mixture of fatigue, bewilderment, and nostalgia for the postwar New York that he so loved, remnants of which are rapidly fading from view as the city gentrifies. Fox's film, which debuted 15 years ago on the British ITV series *The South Bank Show* and had been out of circulation at Frank's request ever since, is finally in theatrical release. In this expanded version, Frank, best known for his seminal photographic work *The Americans*, shot on the road in 1955 and 1956, is presented as one of the last remaining artists of the restless Beat generation. He's surrounded by ghosts and mighty wearied by the past.

Standing near his Bleecker Street loft in Manhattan, Frank grouches, "The yuppies, they have a right to live too, but I don't want to live

amongst them. I don't even want to live next to them, but I have no choice." Well, actually, he does, as he lives part of the time with his second wife, artist June Leaf, at his remote cabin in Mabou on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. But home has always been a problematical construct for Frank, who grew up in Zürich with his mother and father, a German-Jewish refugee rendered stateless by anti-Semitic laws. Switzerland, then as now, was Dullsville, so Frank emigrated to the U.S. in 1947, soon landing a fashion photography gig at *Harper's Bazaar*. Before long he drifted toward more essay-style subjects that took him to Paris, London, and Wales.

When he returned to the U.S., Walker Evans and Edward Steichen encouraged Frank to apply for the Guggenheim fellowship that would underwrite the cross-country tour that produced *The Americans*, a collection of on-the-fly portraits of all strata of society. The book, published first in France in 1958, then

the following year in the U.S., was roundly lambasted by American critics who objected to what they saw as an unwholesome depiction of our country; one of the jarring missteps in *Leaving Home, Coming Home* are the irritating, histrionic voice-overs by actors reading a number of high-dudgeon pans. It was only much later that the book was acclaimed as changing American photography—the website LensCulture, for instance, praises it concisely: "This is the photo book that redefined what a photo book could be—personal, poetic, real." But well before that and other plaudits, Frank, stung by the book's initial negative reception and also soured on commercial photography, had moved on to filmmaking.

The Gene Siskel Film Center has paired Fox's documentary with Frank's debut short film, *Pull My Daisy* (1959), codirected by Alfred Leslie. Better than *Leaving Home, Coming Home*, *Pull My Daisy* situates the viewer in one of Frank's most creative decades, with a cast of who's who among the Beats. Written and narrated by Jack Kerouac, who adapted the third act of his play, *Beat Generation*, the movie stars poets Allen Ginsberg, ➔

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continued from 15

Peter Orlovsky, and Gregory Corso as high-spirited merrymakers; artist Larry Rivers as a railway brakeman whose flat they visit; Belgian actress Delphine Seyrig as his wife; art dealer Richard Bellamy as a visiting bishop; and artist Alice Neel as the cleric's mother. With no plot to speak of and sections of nonsensical narration concatenating like something out of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky," the short was meant to seem improvised, but if you look closely at Ginsberg and Corso's faces, you can tell that Kerouac was trying to match his scripted narration as closely as possible to their moving lips. Anita Ellis (who dubbed Rita Hayworth's "Put the Blame on Mame" in *Gilda*) vocalizes the surreal song that plays over the opening title.

With the exception of Ellis and composer David Amram, all the performers are gone now, including Robert's son, Pablo Frank, the little boy in *Daisy*. Some 25 years after filming, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia, around the same time that Robert's other child, his daughter Andrea, died in a plane crash. Families are fragile in *Leaving Home, Coming Home*: we never learn what happened to Frank's first wife, Mary, but get several clips from his 1969 documentary-drama hybrid *Me and My Brother*, about Orlovsky and his catatonic sibling, Julius. There's also a snippet of *Life Dances On...* (1980), a short Frank made from outtakes from earlier films that's a memorial to both Andrea and to Frank's departed friend Danny Seymour, who disappeared at sea.

In scenes at Mabou, Frank talks about the graphic art and collages he made there to commemorate Andrea, because it's a place where he can get that kind of contemplative work done. Then it's time to get back to New York to see what people are doing, and find new inspiration. The shifts back and forth between his two homes, between the past and present, between one medium of creative expression and another, between the living and the dead, provide a good approximation of an artist's process, but director Fox let his subject lead too much of the way, and the film's resulting stream-of-consciousness shapelessness could easily confuse any viewer who knew little or nothing about Frank and his works going in. Toward the end of *Leaving Home, Coming Home* I found myself hoping for the camera to run out of film again, so that I too could say "enough." **RI**



The Farewell

NOW PLAYING

N The Art of Self-Defense

Writer-director Riley Stearns (*Faults*) is a dark-comedy talent to watch. His latest film, focused on a timid accountant (Jesse Eisenberg) who takes up karate after he is mugged by a biker gang, stabs at the heart of traditional masculinity: What does it mean to "be a man" anyway? Beyond examining the question, this satire flays it wide open, exposing a netherworld at the karate studio that invites comparisons to *Fight Club* and *Full Metal Jacket*, with a shot of modern urgency. The karate instructor (Alessandro Nivola) runs a cult of aggression to which the protagonist quickly subscribes. The chance to fight to the top of a new hierarchy, and look down on a less violent man (David Zellner) and the lone female of the group (Imogen Poots), constitutes a power trip too juicy to ignore. Analogous to the characters in filmmaker Yorgos Lanthimos's satires, Stearns's players speak in formal monotones, which pulls attention to their absurdist actions and the bizarre codes of the universe they inhabit. Powered by stilted interactions and an undercurrent of bloodlust, this society is at once strange and familiar in its uncomfortable parallels to reality. **—LEAH PICKETT R, 104 min. Century Centre Cinema, Century 12 and CineArts 6, River East 21, Showplace ICON**

RR Daisies

My favorite Czech film, and surely one of the most exhilarating stylistic and psychedelic eruptions of the 60s, this madcap and aggressive feminist farce by Věra Chytilová explodes in any number of directions. Two uninhibited young women named Marie engage in escapades that add up less to a plot than to a string of outrageous set pieces, including several antiphallic gags and a free-for-all with fancy food (rivaling Laurel and Hardy) that got Chytilová in lots of trouble with the authorities; disturbing yet liberating, it shows what this talented director can do with freedom. A major influence on Jacques Rivette's *Celine and Julie Go Boating*, this 1966 feature is chock-full of female giggling, which might be interpreted in context as the laughter of Medusa: subversive, bracing, energizing, and rather challenging to most male spectators. In Czech with subtitles. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 74 min. 35 mm. Fri 7/19, 8:30 PM, and Wed 7/24, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

An Elephant Sitting Still

Set over just one day but running almost four hours, Hu Bo's 2018 hyperrealist epic is the most audacious debut feature from mainland China since Wang Bing's nine-hour documentary *West of the Tracks* (2002). Like Wang's film, it derives its power through the accumulation of time and detail—Hu shoots nearly every scene, no matter how long, in a single take, making you feel weighed down in the characters' lives. However ambitious, though, the writer-director-editor still had a long way to go in the fine art of characterization; you care about the subjects because they suffer so much, not because they're particularly distinctive. Hu alternates between four major characters: an old man about to be thrown out of his home by his grown son; the old man's grandson, a bullied high school student who accidentally kills his tormentor; the bully's older brother, who's involved in the criminal underworld; and a female high school student involved in a sexual relationship with an administrator. This gets more formally impressive as the story grows increasingly despairing, cannily seducing you into its pessimistic worldview. Sadly, we'll never know how Hu would have matured from here; he committed suicide a few months before the film's premiere. In Mandarin with subtitles. **—BEN SACHS 234 min. Mon 7/22, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

Everybody Knows

Perhaps the most internationally recognized Iranian filmmaker presently working, Asghar Farhadi has now made two movies in countries other than Iran, *The Past* (2013) and *Everybody Knows* (2018). The first of these was shot in France but focused on an Iranian character; the protagonist, somewhat alienated from French customs despite being married to a Frenchwoman, poignantly reflected Farhadi's own emotional distance from the setting. The more recent film, shot in Spain, contains no Iranian characters—or, for that matter, any character who might be perceived as an outsider. Farhadi has decided to look at people who could conceivably exist anywhere, and unfortunately this ends up working to the movie's detriment. The film's observations don't feel universal, but simply generic. **—BEN SACHS R, 133 min. Sat 7/20, 7 and 9:30 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films**

N The Farewell

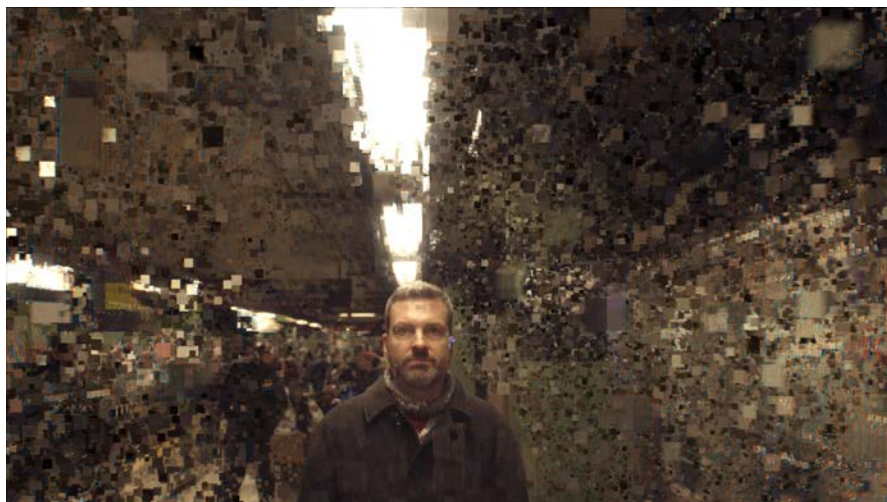
Another one of those self-satisfied low-budget dramas that feel like a standard-issue TV pilot, this vehicle for *Crazy Rich Asians* star Awkwafina delivers trite if inoffensive observations about a range of familiar subjects (family, tradition, assimilation), employing a bland "grown-up" aesthetic that never attempts to elicit any subtext from the material. The heroine is a 30-ish aspiring writer who was born in China but has lived in the New York area since she was six years old. When her maternal grandmother gets diagnosed with lung cancer back in China, her extended family arranges a wedding there so everyone can have a chance to see the old woman before she dies. What follows is a series of hackneyed scenes about the different interpersonal relationships within the family, centering on the heroine's bond with her grandmother. If you've never seen a film about Chinese people, you might find the depictions of Chinese family rituals interesting. Lulu Wang directed her own script. In English and subtitled Mandarin. **—BEN SACHS PG, 98 min. Century Centre Cinema, River East 21**

RR The Florida Project

Writer-director Sean Baker (*Starlet, Tangerine*) takes a sympathetic look at a couple of motels in Orlando that serve as home for a variety of working-poor individuals. The film unfolds mainly from the perspective of a six-year-old girl, whose single, twentysomething mother supports herself and the child through prostitution and scamming tourists; Baker also broadens his focus occasionally to consider the activities of their motel manager (Willem Dafoe), a paternal figure to both mother and daughter. The subject matter may be sordid and sad, but the tone is generally upbeat, reflecting the little girl's cheery, naive outlook. This also conveys with remarkable vividness a small child's sense of time: Baker places no dramatic emphasis on any individual scene, granting a sense of wide-eyed wonder to major and minor events alike. **—BEN SACHS R, 115 min. 35 mm. Baker attends the screening. Preceded by Gus Meins's 1934 Our Gang comedy The First Round Up (20 min., 16 mm). Mon 7/22, 7 PM. Music Box**

N The Great Hack

Trippy CGI animation bookends this provocative, buzzy documentary that investigates the roles the high-tech merchants of influence Cambridge Analytica played in the election of President Donald Trump and the UK's Brexit vote. Directors Karim Amer and Jehane Noujaim have trimmed their original Sundance festival version by a half hour, sharpening the focus on the two protagonists, David Carroll, a professor of media design at Manhattan's Parsons School of Design, and Carole Cadwalladr, a British journalist who became alarmed at how the Brexit campaign was undermining democracy in the UK. After Cadwalladr broke the news that Cambridge Analytica had conducted a survey of more than a quarter million consenting Facebook users, only to secretly access some 86 million users' accounts and mine their raw data, Carroll sued the firm's parent company, SCL, for the return of his personal data set. Sandwiched between these two crusaders is the film's antagonist, Brittany Kaiser, a former social media intern on Barack Obama's presidential campaign who joined Cambridge Analytica as director of business development and targeted those Facebook users considered "persuadables" in order to flip them into Trump voters; she later turned whistle-blower. It's Carroll who neatly sums up the scandal and its fallout: the digital traces of ourselves we thoughtlessly leave behind with every key-



stroke have turned the consumer into the commodity. Put another way, in the digital marketplace everything's for sale, including us. —**ANDREA GRONVALL** 113 min. *Streaming on Netflix*

N Hampstead

Romantic comedies with leads over the age of 50 owe much to Diane Keaton's later life commitment to the genre; she has starred in about half of them released stateside. Here Keaton reprises the role of the slightly kooky, klutzy, and lovable gal next door in this toasty crumpet of a film, set around London's scenic Hampstead Heath. This time she's an American expat and widow burdened by her late husband's debts whose spirits lift when she meets a grizzled, self-assured hermit (Brendan Gleeson) who lives on the forested edge of the heath in a hand-built shack. Gleeson's character, loosely based on Hampstead Heath dweller Harry Hallows, is an opposites-attract match for Keaton's, with their meet-cute at Karl Marx's grave in Highgate Cemetery producing immediate sparks. In contrast to the city's haut monde, they're both outsiders, but there's a catch: the hermit is fending off wealthy developers who threaten to remove him from his home, while the expat has awkward social ties to the antagonists. Screenwriter Robert Festinger (*In the Bedroom*) and director Joel Hopkins (*Last Chance Harvey*) keep the mood light and the conflict manageable; this is, after all, a romance. With Lesley Manville and Simon Callow. —**LEAH PICKETT** 103 min. *Fri 7/19, 2 and 6:15 PM; Sat 7/20, 5:15 and 7:45 PM; Sun 7/21, 3:15 PM; Mon 7/22, 6 PM; Tue 7/23, 8:15 PM; Wed 7/24, 6 PM; and Thu 7/25, 8:15 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

RR The Hate U Give

Intelligently scripted by Audrey Wells and sensitively directed by George Tillman Jr. (*Soul Food*), this adaptation of Angie Thomas's acclaimed young-adult novel merits comparison with Robert Mulligan's film of *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) in its nuanced consideration of delicate social issues from a young person's perspective. A 16-year-old Black girl from a poor, inner-city neighborhood attending a private (and largely white) suburban high school reconsiders her place in the world after one of her friends, also Black, is shot dead by a white police officer. The premise provides a framework for all sorts of valuable social observations—about race, police brutality, and the interconnected problems of poverty and violence that have long plagued America's cities—and, remarkably, none of them feel forced; the filmmakers understand their characters so thoroughly that the insights seem to grow organically from their experiences. This is American studio filmmaking at its finest. With Amandla Stenberg, Regina Hall, Common,

and Russell Hornsby. —**BEN SACHS** PG-13, 132 min. *Wed 7/24, 7:30 PM. Beverly Arts Center*

RR Hedwig and the Angry Inch

Hedwig (John Cameron Mitchell), whose half-hearted, half-assed sex change at least got her out of Berlin, fronts the Angry Inch, an obscure rock band playing gigs in small clubs while the rock superstar who dumped Hedwig years earlier plays the stadiums next door. Hedwig tells her tale of woe to a succession of unreceptive onscreen audiences that, by implication, include us. Dramatized with a stylized realism that seems perfectly natural in a musical, this 2001 saga draws on Plato and 70s glam rock with equal aplomb. Writer-director Mitchell originally created Hedwig for the stage with composer-lyricist Stephen Trask, who sings the vocals. With Trask, Miriam Shor, and Michael Pitt. —**LISA ALSPECTOR** R, 95 min. *Fri 7/19-Sat 7/20, 7:15 and 9:30 PM; Sun 7/21, 2:30 PM; Mon 7/22, 9:30 PM; Tue 7/23, 2:30 PM; Wed 7/24, 7:15 and 9:30 PM; Thu 7/25, 9:30 PM. Music Box*

Jezebel

They wouldn't let Bette Davis be Scarlett O'Hara, so Warners cooked up this 1938 antebellum epic for her—and her performance, as the fiery southern belle who marries a banker (George Brent) though her heart belongs to a dandy (Henry Fonda), was good enough to win her an Oscar. As usual with director William Wyler, the film is far more interesting for its actors than for its direction; but some of the set pieces—the ball where Davis appears in a scandalous red dress and the yellow-fever epidemic (shades of the burning of Atlanta)—are still impressive. —**DON DRUKER** 103 min. 35 mm. *Sat 7/20-Sun 7/21, 11:30 AM. Music Box*

RR The Lady Eve

Preston Sturges extended his range beyond the crazy farces that had made his reputation with this romantic 1941 comedy, and his hand proved just as sure. Henry Fonda is the heir to a massive beer fortune who has spent his life in the scientific study of snakes; Barbara Stanwyck is the con girl who exclaims "What a life!" and sets out to turn Fonda around. Among the faces who crowd the frames are Charles Coburn, Eugene Palette, William Demarest, Eric Blore, Melville Cooper, and Jimmy Conlin. —**DAVE KEHR** 94 min. 35 mm. *Fri 7/19, 4:15 PM; Sat 7/20, 3:15 PM; and Thu 7/25, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

N The Lion King

Jon Favreau directed this CGI-animated remake of Disney's 1994 traditionally animated film about a lion-cub prince who must find his place in the world after

The Great Hack

FILM

his father is killed. Donald Glover, Seth Rogen, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Alfre Woodard, Billy Eichner, Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, and James Earl Jones provided voices. PG, 118 min. *ArLight, Block 37, Century Centre Cinema, Cicero 14, City North, Ford City, Galewood Crossings, Harper Theater, Lake Theatre, Navy Pier, New 400, River East 21, Showplace ICON, 600 N. Michigan, Studio Movie Grill Chatham, Webster Place*

RR Moonrise Kingdom

Shot on Super 16-millimeter and set mainly inside a 15-mile radius, this fairy-tale period piece (2012) is Wes Anderson's most intimate film since *Bottle Rocket* (1996) and maybe his most deeply felt overall. It takes place in 1965 on a fictional island called New Penzance, where a 12-year-old orphan runs away from scout camp with a morose girl he considers his soul mate. A group of adults—the girl's parents (Bill Murray, Frances McDormand), the boy's scout master (Edward Norton), a local sheriff (Bruce Willis)—organize a search and in the process coalesce into a little family of lonely depressives. As usual, Anderson's densely imagined mise-en-scene contains many allusions to movies, music, and literature (Benjamin Britten's orchestral work being a key touchstone); what's different this time is that most of the cultural references grow naturally from the characterization. —**BEN SACHS** PG-13, 94 min. *Fri 7/19-Mon 7/22, 11 PM. Logan*

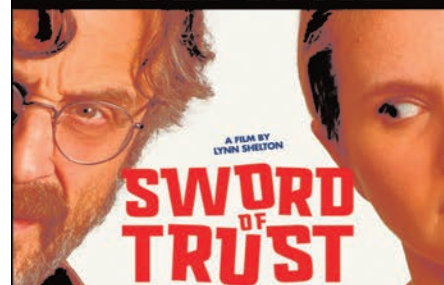
The Music Man

Morton DaCosta's straight translation (1962) of the Broadway blockbuster is pretty dismal in its desperate exuberance; but at least it boasts the slick charm of Robert Preston, who nearly saves it with his graying-at-the-temples boyishness. With Hermione Gingold, Buddy Hackett, Paul Ford, and Shirley Jones as Marian the librarian. —**DON DRUKER** G, 151 min. *Outdoor screening. Tue 7/23, 6:30 PM. Pritzker Pavilion, Millennium Park FREE*

RR The Palm Beach Story

Rudy Vallee turns in his best performance as a gentle, puny millionaire named Hackensacker in this brilliant, simultaneously tender and scalding 1942 screwball comedy by Preston Sturges—one of the real gems ➡

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➡ in Sturges's hyperproductive period at Paramount. Claudette Colbert, married to an ambitious but penniless architectural engineer (Joel McCrea), takes off for Florida and winds up being wooed by Hackensacker. When McCrea shows up she persuades him to pose as her brother. Also on hand are such indelible Sturges creations as the Weenie King (Robert Dudley), the madly destructive Ale and Quail Club, Hackensacker's acerbic sister (Mary Astor), and her European boyfriend of obscure national origins (Sig Arno). The Hackensacker character may be the closest thing to self-parody in the Sturges canon, but it's informed with such wry wisdom and humor that it transcends its personal nature (as well as its reference to such tycoons as the Rockefellers). With William Demarest, Jack Norton, Franklin Pangborn, and Jimmy Conlin. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** 90 min. 35 mm. Sat 7/20, 5:15 PM, and Tue 7/23, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center

Punch-Drunk Love

The fourth feature (2002) of writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson (after *Hard Eight*, *Boogie Nights*, and *Magnolia*) is a stridently wacky romantic comedy that stands or falls on whether you find Adam Sandler funny as a small businessman working out of a warehouse in greater Los Angeles. He didn't make me laugh once, and neither did his costar Emily Watson, though Philip Seymour Hoffman, in what amounts to a cameo, made me laugh once or twice. I tend to like quirkiness, but this arch effort is so eager to be quirky nearly everything winds up willfully mannered, from Jon Brion's flashy percussive score to the hyperbolically absurdist plot. Still, I wouldn't have minded the Hollywood schlock lurking behind the studied weirdness if I'd believed in any of the characters on any level. With Luiz Guzman. —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** R, 95 min. Tue 7/23–Thu 7/25, 11 PM. Logan

The Rocky Horror Picture Show

This 1975 film version of the bisexual-chic rock musical tries its damndest to be outrageous, but finally has a hard time justifying its R rating. The picture might have made a pretty good college show—with Dr. Frank N. Furter (Tim Curry) sewing up a homemade stud to the accompaniment of a sexually ambiguous kick line (the chorines all look strangely like Lina Wertmüller). But the wit is too weak to sustain a film, and the songs all sound the same. Directed by Jim Sharman. —**DAVE KEHR** R, 100 min. 35 mm. Sat 6/20, midnight. Music Box

The Room

Written, produced, and directed by Tommy Wiseau, this inept 2003 melodrama has become a *Rocky Horror*-style cult favorite. Wiseau stars as an eerily placid and good-natured banker whose live-in girlfriend is secretly getting it on with his best friend, though the filmmaker often strikes out in different directions, only to bump into the wall and come back. As someone who's watched more bad movies than you can imagine, I'm mostly immune to the so-bad-it's-good aesthetic, though I can see how, viewed in a theater at midnight after a few drinks, this might conjure up its own hilariously demented reality. Poignantly, Wiseau has now repositioned the movie as a "black comedy." —**J.R. JONES** R, 99 min. 35 mm. Fri 7/19, midnight. Music Box

RR Ⓝ Sword of Trust

Director Lynn Shelton (*Humpday*), propelled by a desire to work again with comedian Marc Maron, here delivers a deftly economical comedy that succeeds where one might think it shouldn't. Maron stars as a pawn shop owner in Birmingham, Alabama, who gets

roped into helping a lesbian couple sell a Civil War sword that's alleged to prove the south really won the thing. Their buyer? An extremist right-wing outfit committed to advancing that alternate view of history. It sounds nutty—and it is—but Shelton, who cowrote the script with Mike O'Brien, and the cast (which includes Michaela Watkins and Jillian Bell as the couple, plus Jon Bass and Dan Bakkedahl) execute the provocative scenario with amiable persiflage. It's equal parts spry, improvisational comedy and salient social commentary; much like the post-*Mutual Appreciation* films of Shelton's colleague Andrew Bujalski, this is a prime example of what can happen when mumblecore filmmakers continue to cultivate their skills. —**KATHLEEN SACHS** R, 88 min. Fri 7/19–Sun 7/21, 2:45, 4:45, 7, and 9:15 PM; Mon 7/22, 2:45, 4:45, and 7 PM; Tue 7/23–Wed 7/24, 4:45, 7, and 9:15 PM; Thu 7/25, 2:45, 4:45, and 7 PM. Music Box

RR Valley Girl

Director Martha Coolidge turned a short-lived fad into a genuine sleeper, an exploitation film that thoroughly transcends its origins to become a highly appealing romantic comedy (1983). Pert, toothy Val gal Deborah Foreman falls in love with Hollywood punk Nicolas Cage, who suggests a lobotomized Robert Mitchum; the star-crossed lovers are threatened by peer pressure and cultural incompatibility, but true feeling triumphs in the end. Coolidge hasn't made a campy, condescending comedy, but a satiric romance in which the background gags and caricatures contribute to a sense of significant conflicts and solid emotions. It's irresistible. With Elizabeth Daily, Michael Bowen, Lee Purcell, Colleen Camp, and Frederic Forrest. —**DAVE KEHR** R, 95 min. 35 mm. Mike "McBeardo" McPadden, author of *Teen Movie Hell*, introduces the screening. Sun 7/21, 7 PM. Music Box

Ⓝ Werewolf Ninja Philosopher

The best thing about this underground New York comedy is the title, which sounds like something the characters in a Daniel Pinkwater novel might watch. Writer-director Sujewa Ekanayake inspires goodwill at the start by revealing that the movie is actually about a werewolf ninja philosopher—who's also a respected detective and something of a famous playboy—but he quickly dashes it with his clodhopper approach to comedy: every joke gets played more times than necessary, and Ekanayake's haphazard pacing slowly hammers every good idea into the ground. Some underground productions (like John Waters's early features or much of the Kuchar brothers' work) can be endearing in their amateurishness, suggesting a certain punk zealotness, but Ekanayake's amateurishness simply feels lazy. Still, given the movie's personal (even hermetic) nature and its efforts to be original, I'd sooner watch this than pretty much any Marvel Studios release. —**BEN SACHS** 72 min. Ekanayake attends the Friday-Monday screenings; lead actor Art Shrian Tiwari attends the Friday-Sunday screenings. Fri 7/19, 7 and 9 PM; Sat 7/20, 3, 5, 7, and 9 PM; Sun 7/21, 1, 3, 5, and 7 PM; Mon 7/22–Thu 7/25, 7 and 9 PM. Facets Cinematheque

Wind Across the Everglades

A kind of litmus test for auteursists, this philosophical adventure story set in turn-of-the-century Florida (1958) was Nicholas Ray's penultimate Hollywood assignment, though he was fired before the end of shooting and barred from the final editing by screenwriter Budd Schulberg (*On the Waterfront*, *A Face in the Crowd*), who produced the film with his brother Stuart. (In his introduction to the published screenplay, Schulberg

barely mentions Ray.) An ecological parable, it pits an earnest schoolteacher turned game warden (Christopher Plummer) against a savage poacher of wild birds (Burl Ives) heading a grungy gang in the swamps. Ray's masterful use of color and mystical sense of equality between the antagonists (also evident in *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Bitter Victory*) are made all the more piquant here by his feeling for folklore and outlaw ethics as well as his cadenced mise-en-scene. The result is somewhat choppy (one gets a sense of subplots being truncated), yet the film builds to a powerful encounter between Plummer and Ives, and Ray's personal touches are unmistakable. (There's even an upside-down point-of-view shot, similar to the ones in *Rebel* and *Hot Blood*.) The performances are quite striking, especially Chana Eden's as the female lead—not to mention cameos by Gypsy Rose Lee, author MacKinlay Kantor, and Peter Falk (in his film debut). —**JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** 93 min. 16 mm. Thu 7/25, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films

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RR The Woman in the Window

A masterful film noir (1944) from Fritz Lang's rich American period, with Edward G. Robinson as a professor of psychology who learns by doing as he becomes obsessed with the image of a woman in a painting. I probably prefer *Scarlet Street*, Lang's follow-up with the same cast (Joan Bennett, Dan Duryea), but between one masterpiece and another who's to choose? —**DAVE KEHR** 99 min. 16-mm archival print. Fri 7/19, 7 and 9:30 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films

ALSO PLAYING

Ⓝ Armstrong

A documentary portrait of astronaut Neil Armstrong. David Fairhead directed. 100 min. Fri 7/19, 7:30 PM; Sat 7/20, 6 and 8 PM; Sun 7/21, 4 and 6 PM; Mon 7/22–Thu 7/25, 7:30 PM. Facets Cinematheque

Darlin'

A feral teen is taken to a religious home in this horror film sequel to 2011's *The Woman*. Pollyanna McIntosh directed and stars. 100 min. Fri 7/19–Sat 7/20, midnight. Music Box

Emerging Women Filmmakers

A program of two Cuban films: Carla Valdés León's 2016 documentary *December Days* (45 min.) and Sheyla Pool's 2018 short narrative *Fragile* (15 min.). In Spanish with subtitles. 60 min. Fri 7/19, 7 PM. Athenaeum Theatre

The Last American Virgin

Boaz Davidson directed this 1982 remake of his own



Lion King

1950s-set hit 1978 Israeli film, updated to Los Angeles in the 80s, about three high school friends continually trying (and for one, failing) to score with women. R, 92 min. 35 mm. Mike "McBeardo" McPadden, author of *Teen Movie Hell*, introduces the screening. Sun 7/21, 9 PM. Music Box

Films by Todd Lillithun

A program of four narrative and documentary shorts (2000–2018) by Todd Lillithun, local filmmaker, social worker, and former program director at Chicago Filmmakers, who passed away in 2018. Sat 7/20, 7 PM. Chicago Filmmakers

Nureyev

David Morris and Jacqui Morris directed this UK documentary about the celebrated dancer Rudolf Nureyev. 109 min. Fri 7/19, 4 PM; Sun 7/21, 1 PM; and Tue 7/23, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center

Ⓝ Once Upon a Time . . . In Hollywood

Quentin Tarantino directed this comedy-drama about a past-his-prime actor and his stunt double (Leonardo DiCaprio and Brad Pitt) struggling for work in 1969 Los Angeles. With Margot Robbie, Emile Hirsch, Dakota Fanning, Bruce Dern, and Al Pacino. 161 min. Showing in 70 mm at the Music Box Theatre; digital presentations elsewhere. ArcLight, Block 37, Cicero 14, City North 14, Ford City, Galewood Crossings 14, Harper Theater, Lake Theatre, River East 21, 600 N. Michigan, Studio Movie Grill Chatham, Webster Place

Roll Red Roll

Nancy Schwartzman directed this documentary about the 2012 rape case involving high school students in Steubenville, Ohio. 80 min. Followed by a discussion. Sat 7/20, 2 PM. Chicago Cultural Center [FREE](#)

Silver Room Block Party Film Fest

Cinema 53 hosts a daylong series of shorts programs, each curated by a local black-film-focused organization or festival, as part of the Silver Room Block Party. Sat 7/20, noon–10 PM. Harper Theater [FREE](#)

A Time in Quchi

Chang Tso-chi directed this 2013 Taiwanese drama about a boy sent to live with his grandfather for the summer during his parents' divorce. In Mandarin and Minnan with subtitles. 109 min. Wed 7/24, 6:30 PM. Chicago Cultural Center [FREE](#) [FI](#)



A brief oral history of the Silver Room Block Party

Since moving to Hyde Park, this free community-focused festival has blossomed into one of Chicago's most important cultural institutions.

By LEOR GALIL

In December 1997, Eric Williams opened the Silver Room at 1410 N. Milwaukee in Wicker Park, selling jewelry and hosting intimate music and art events. As the store evolved into a commercial and cultural hub, Williams became an important voice in the community—and while serving on the board for the neighborhood's chamber of commerce, he voiced his frustration about its street festivals largely ignoring musicians of color.

In 2002, he launched the Silver Room Sound System Block Party in an alley next to his shop on the third weekend in July—two weeks after the Chosen Few Picnic and one week before Wicker Park Fest. Williams never advertised the event, but thanks in no small part to his store's stature and his place in the community,

the block party blossomed into an important institution through word of mouth—especially after Williams's shop moved to Hyde Park in 2015. (It's since opened a second store back in Wicker Park.)

Last year 40,000 people came to 53rd Street for the block party, which featured dozens of musical acts on three outdoor stages and in seven shops, plus a mini film festival and basketball drills and exhibitions. Williams has always been the main organizer for the free event, but he's hardly done it alone; for this oral history, I spoke with several of the people who've helped the Silver Room Block Party (as it's often called for short) become one of Chicago's most culturally important events.



Scenes from the 2017 Silver Room Block Party, including (at lower right) a performance by legendary New York hip-hop producer and rapper Pete Rock
APRIL ALONSO

Eric Williams The block party was born as a response to not being included in other festivals. The first one was in this little alley next to what's Cumin now. I lived above the original Silver Room.

Ron Trent (DJ and producer) His store was always a meeting place, and people would come hang out. We figured it might be good to just invite our friends and have a big block party, and celebrate music and dance like we normally do. ➔

SILVER ROOM BLOCK PARTY

Dozens of mostly local acts from a wide variety of genres perform on outdoor stages and in indoor venues in Hyde Park, including the parking lot of Harper Court (5235 S. Harper) and half a dozen nearby storefronts. Sat 7/20, 10 AM-9 PM, multiple locations, free, all ages

continued from 19

Eric Williams I called some friends up: “Hey, you DJ,” “Hey, you sing.” Called up maybe ten, 15 people, and they called some friends. We did it in the alley.

Ron Trent I’ve always had equipment or been savvy in terms of sound, so we were able to utilize the system that we had.

Eric Williams We had no generators. We had extension cords coming out of my house. No permits, no security, no nothing. The first year 200, 300 people came.

Ron Trent First time, it was just me. After that we had a special guest: Kool Herc, who is the infamous godfather of hip-hop.

Mario Smith (poet, educator, activist, and radio personality) The first one I went to was the first one I was a host at—I want to say it was the third block party.

Eric Williams The first two were in the alley, but then I moved the store to 1442 N. Milwaukee. Then we did it on Evergreen Avenue, which was slightly bigger but still not huge. We didn’t even have permits, even then—we had a little block-party permit.

Mario Smith The second time I hosted, I did the entire block party—none of the people who were supposed to host showed up. And I just did it. I was way, way more exhausted than I imagined I would be. But I just did it, ‘cause it was for Eric, and the block party was really cool. I was like, “OK, I’m doing this again,” and I have not stopped doing it. I’m grateful for that day that nobody showed up.

Eric Williams All my friends are artists, and I DJ, so it was not hard to find people to perform.

Ron Trent I utilized my relationships, people that I knew, and called in favors.

Eric Williams We just explained to them, “This is what’s going on—we don’t have tons of money.” But they wanted to come be a part of the vibe.

Rob McKay (former tour producer and Connect Gallery co-owner) At first I was a supporter, and that was probably around ’08—from there on, I’ve been an integral part in making sure everything goes up when it’s supposed to.

Eric Williams We didn’t do radio ads, none of that—it grew organically.

Mario Smith Eric invited everybody, right? And he took care of everything—and he made everybody feel included. I noticed that from the beginning.

Rob McKay Large-scale festivals, they garner the top acts. We look at the artists that are bubbling under, that fit this demographic of Black, Brown, and white—from everywhere. The curation side of it is very purposeful, to get that vibe. We take a lot of pride in doing that.

Mario Smith My involvement increased because I started going, “Hey, so-and-so would be good to play. Maybe this would work if we tried that. What do you think about this, Eric?” I’m always in Eric’s ear about something regarding the block party, honestly, starting the week after.

Eric Williams We’re not really based upon, like, headliners. The word “headliner” doesn’t exist; everyone’s font is the same size. People come to the block party not because of who’s performing; they come because it’s a good time. They know it’ll be good music there.

Ron Trent I saw, “OK, this potentially can be something.” I had been doing a lot of work internationally—I saw the growth potential there.

Eric Williams Before we moved to Hyde Park, I remember thinking, “This is probably 10,000 people.”

Candice Washington (former education coordinator at the University of Chicago and founder of Brown Books & Paint Brushes) The last time it was in Wicker Park, I stumbled upon it—I was like, “Oh my God, what is this?” It was a giant diaspora of beautiful creatives doing they thing.

Mario Smith When he moved from the store in Wicker Park and came to Hyde Park, that day I was like, “You’ve got to do the block party.”

Eric Williams I was like, “I’m never gonna do it ever again.” It’s a lot of work—I was losing money.

Amy Srodon (marketing communications manager for the University of Chicago’s Commercial Real Estate Operations) It sounded like such a labor of love. The fact



More fun at the 2017 Silver Room Block Party: a friendly dance battle between Marcus “Da God” Prater and Justin “Senpai” Imo (top), and a crowd circulating in the Doerr Building to look at art and dance to the DJ (bottom) © APRIL ALONSO

that it involves art, culture, and music—it sounded really unusual and wonderful. We all thought it would be a great addition to Hyde Park.

Eric Williams We really had to have a different kind of structure to be able to pay for it—to really seek out sponsors.

Amy Srodon In 2016 and 2017, the university, we were able to underwrite a portion of the festival.

Eric Reaves (program manager for the South East Chicago Commission) When they opened up their brick-and-mortar store, we’d had one festival event. Eric told me about what he was doing. I said, “We still need to have two events in Hyde Park—why don’t I just be the key sponsor for you?” It sounded like a good mission and a good event.

Eric Williams Moving to Hyde Park has been a whole different thing. I have to do it by the books. The generators probably cost more

money than the first nine block parties total. You’re dealing with a different kind of footprint; you’re encroaching on people’s communities now.

Eric Reaves We work as a conduit with the City of Chicago Department of Planning, helping him put the application in. We work with local businesses, with local residents, and with him directly. Also we provide a sponsorship investment.

Mario Smith That first year, Harper Court is full of people. I looked at him, and I said, “You’re not gonna be able to be in Harper Court for long.”

Eric Williams The first year we did it in Hyde Park, 15,000 people came.

Eric Reaves It actually blew us away, the number of people who came. I believe the first year it was 20,000 people.

continued on 29



Presented by Downtown Hyde Park



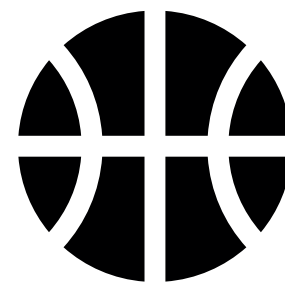
16th Annual Silverroom Sound System Block Party

The Greater Good

July 20 Noon–10p

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

For Grown Folks



Noon–10p | Celebrating Cultural Diversity Through Expression, Music, and Art



Jazz | Classical | Hip-hop | RnB | House | **LIVE MUSIC** | 3 Stages | DJs | Over 30 Different Bands
DANCING | Shopping | Over 50 Local Vendors | Clothing | Style | **FASHION SHOW**
Get a taper fade or lineup | **ARTIST ROW** | Support Local Artists | Food Trucks | Beer Gardens
ROLLER SKATING | Free Skate Rental | Rink DJ | **FILM FESTIVAL** | 24 Indie Films
3 on 3 | 3 point Contest | **BASKETBALL** | Free Throw Contest | and More

Silverroom Block Party

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

Bring the Kids



Noon–6p | One of the Truly All-Ages Events in Chicago



ART ACTIVITIES | Black Creativity | Roller Skating | Story Area | DJ Lessons | **BRAID BAR**
Tribal Facepainting | Glitter Tattoos | **YOUTH IMPROV** | Cooking Activities | Theater Games
Family Yoga | **KID DJ PERFORMANCES** | Innovation Kits | Dance & Musical Performances
African Dancing & Drumming | Girls Drumming | **BREAKDANCING PERFORMANCE**
Balloon Animals | Imagination Playground | Hula Hooping | Street Art | and More

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

Saturday 20 July

Stages

Noon–10p | Independent Music You Don't Hear on the Radio

1

53rd & Lake Park

Leslé Honoré
Opening

Low-End Theory
12:00p

Daily Meat Supply
1:15p

She Through Me Ancestor Soiree
2:00p

Pastor T.L. Barrett
2:45p

Chicago Sinfonietta Residents
Orchestrate Project
3:30p

The Independents featuring
Brittney Carter, Philmore Green,
Neak, Thaione Davie, King Drive
4:15p

Masta Ace & Marco Polo
5:30p

Papo Santiago
6:30p

Tobe Nwigwe
7:30p

Ron Trent
8:00p

2

52nd & Harper Ave

Amplify Youth Arts Showcase
12:00p

Muntu Dance Theatre
2:30p

Alexis Lombre
3:00p

King Hedley II Monologues
4:00p

Billy Branch
4:30p

Kristiana Colón
5:15p

For Colored Girls featuring
Melody Angel
5:30p

Brother El
6:00p

Bomba Con Buya
6:30p

Avery R Young
7:30p

Growing Concerns
8:30p

Ang13 & Urbanized Music
9:00p

3

53rd & Dorchester Ave

Kids W.A.Y. Acting Academy
12:00p

After School Matters
12:45p

B Vax
1:00p

Brian Babylon Baquan
2:00p

Lee Farmer
2:30p

Reggae Dance Jam
Hosted by Lady Sol & Friends
3:45p

The TriiBE
4:45p

Ron Carroll
5:45p

Anthony Nicholson
6:45p

Vic Spencer
8:00p

Small World Collective
8:45p

Silverroom Block Party

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

Saturday 20 July

Free Films



Noon–10p | The Bigger Picture: Chicago Black Media Showcase

Cinema53 and Harper Theater present a unique showcase for the Block Party featuring an incredible array of film and video for community viewing and conversation.



24 different indie films with interviews and Q and A sessions.

Free admission and free popcorn.

OTV | Open Television
12–2p | 4 Films

Intersectional television platform releasing indie TV series and video art online and in Chicago.

CIFF's Black Perspectives
2–4p | 5 Films

Programming featuring selections of award-winning and audience favorite short films.



Black Harvest Film Fest
4–6p | 3 Films

Films exploring the images, heritage, and history of the worldwide Black experience.



Collected Voices
6–8p | 12 Films

Ethnographic pieces that explore the intersection of race, age, class, gender, and sexuality.



Chicago South Side Film Fest
8–10p | 4 Films

Filmmakers with opportunities to diversify the quality of entertainment options in the area.

Silverroom Block Party

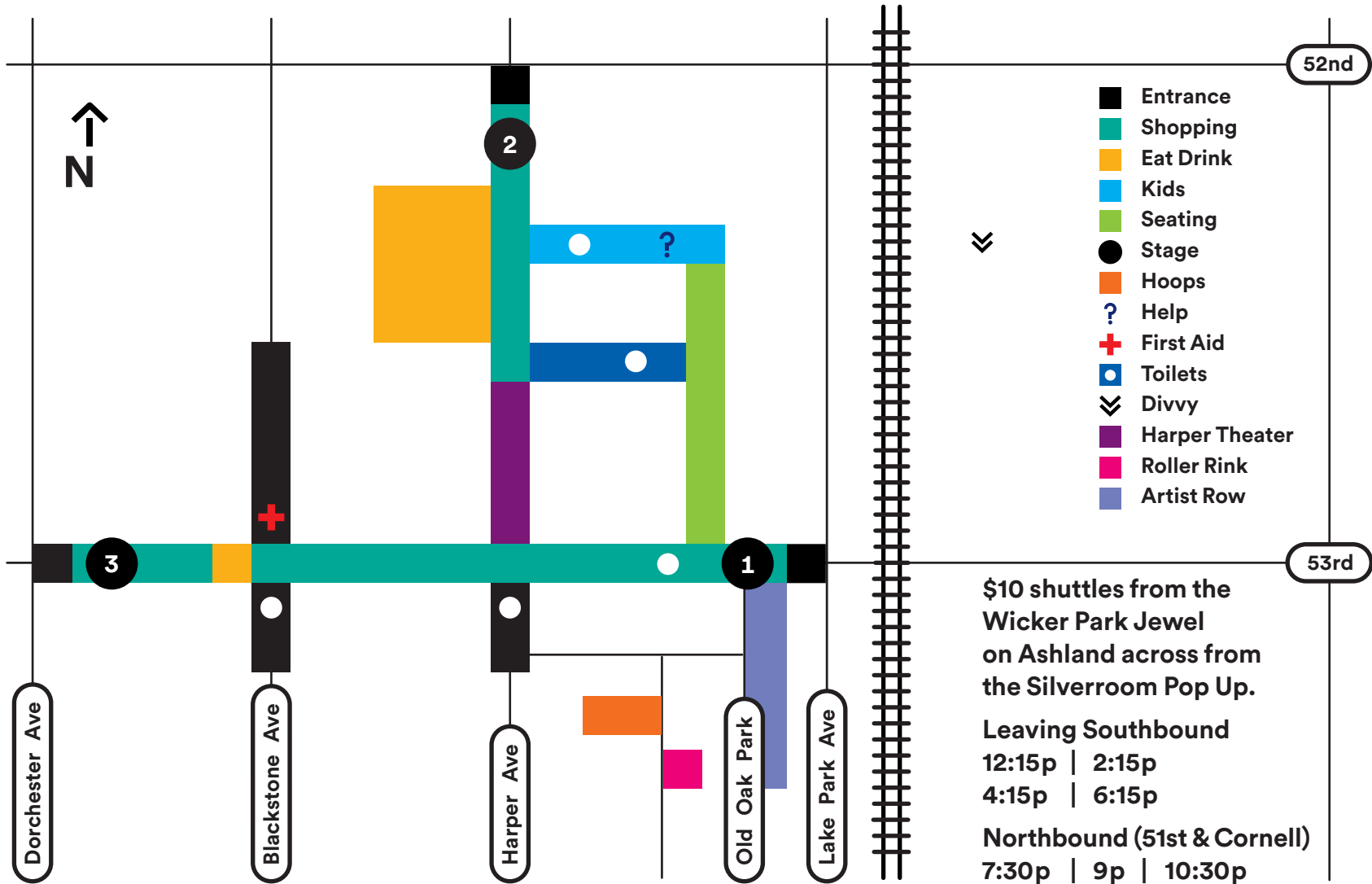
SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

Details

Noon–10p | Downtown Hyde Park, 53rd and Harper Ave



Download the Silverroom Block Party app for lineups, schedules and more.
SilverroomBlockParty.com

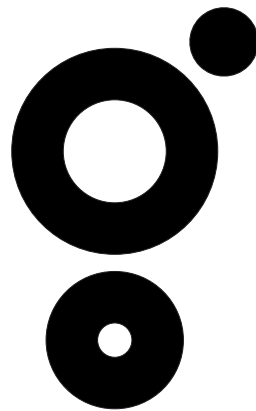


SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

Saturday 20 July

Our Gratitude

The Silverroom Block Party is a Community Supported Event



Silverroom Block Party

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION SPONSORED BY THE SILVERROOM FOUNDATION

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Ron Trent It was a sign that obviously this was something that the south side of Chicago was thirsting for.

Eric Williams The second year, it was 30,000 people.

Mario Smith The last couple of years, it's more of talking to the committee, which is Eric, Rob, Susan, Amy, and everybody—getting them to say “Yeah, that works” or “No, that doesn't.”

Eric Williams We have a team of people—we all just volunteer. I don't want to lose this block-party vibe. The more people you get, the harder that is—to keep this thing that was 200 people.

Amy Srodon After that 2017 block party, I said to Eric, “Hey, you know, what do you think about having a dedicated kids' area? Would that be something that I could help you with?” And he just loved it.

Eric Williams I love seeing kids dance with their parents, because I have a ten-year-old daughter. You can dance with your kid and it's safe, and everybody's having a good time.



An artist promoting the Hendricks Artworks studio paints portraits onstage during the 2017 Silver Room Block Party. © APRIL ALONSO

Candice Washington I got in touch with Amy—we got to planning.

Amy Srodon For the 2018 block party, we had the first-ever kids' area, and that was held in Harper Court.

Candice Washington I called up some of my friends, people that I've worked with through my nonprofit, and I got them involved. My vision, along with Amy's, was to create a mini Silver Room Block Party within the Silver Room Block Party—for kids.

Eric Williams We had maybe a hundred vendors last year, between food and retail.

Mario Smith Last year, we had the Sean Haley music pavilion for our brother who passed away before the Block Party; 40,000 people on 53rd Street, all these kids; and Amara Enyia, who had announced her run for mayor, being on our stage.

Eric Williams It's a huge impact—this last year was \$2 million in economic impact at the block party. All the businesses make money; all these vendors make money.

Eric Reaves Businesses realized a 200 percent increase in sales compared to the same day the previous year.

Eric Williams This year's theme is the greater good. Last year's theme was beautiful people. Every year the theme helps push forward positive energy.

Amy Srodon It's like a family reunion for a lot of people. You see a ton of people hugging. You see people of all ages, from little kids in strollers to grandparents. There's really something for everybody to enjoy.

Eric Williams We're gonna build a 10,000-square-foot roller-skating rink in the bank parking lot.

Rob McKay We want people to say, “I can do this, I can do a version of this.” That's a big part of why we do what we do.

Mario Smith It is the most unique thing in the city—it's its own ecosystem now. To be able to be a part of that, it's humbling.

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DON'T MISS...

7.22 JEFF BRADSHAW
FEAT. MARQUEAL JORDAN

7.23 JUST US GALS!
COMEDY SHOW

7.24 TORTURED SOUL

**7.28 ROSS MATHEWS-
DRAGTASTIC BUBBLY
BRUNCH**

**7.29 THE WOMEN OF MISTER
KELLY'S**

**7.30 CONYA DOSS & GORDON
CHAMBERS**

7.31 RED WANTING BLUE

8.3 WE ARE ONE X-PERIENCE
HONORING MAZE & FRANKIE BEVERLY

8.4 CLARE BOWEN
WITH IMOGEN CLARK

8.6 SLUM VILLAGE

UPCOMING SHOWS

7.19 CHUCK PROPHET WITH EDWARD
DAVID ANDERSON

7.21 MAC MCANALLY
WITH ADAM WAKEFIELD

7.25 OLETA ADAMS

7.26 LOUIS PRIMA JR. & THE WITNESSES

8.1 JOHN MAYALL

8.2 MARSHA AMBROSIUS

8.8 ZO! + CARMEN RODGERS

**8.11 ROSS MATHEWS - DRAGTASTIC
BUBBLY BRUNCH**

8.11 JIM BRICKMAN

8.12 TALISK

8.13-14 DAVE MASON

8.15 ARI HEST

8.16 MINDI ABAIR & THE BONESHAKERS

8.18 THE THE BAND BAND
TRIBUTE TO THE BAND

8.19 MATT WERTZ

8.20 OMAR VS. MARK DE CLIVE-LOWE

8.21 SURABHI ENSEMBLE

8.22 JOHN WAITE

8.23 MAX WEINBERG'S JUKEBOX





Leaders 1354 mastermind Corey Gilkey with fellow Boxville cofounder Kaaron Johnson at the south-side shipping-container mall DAVON CLARK



Fat Tiger Workshop cofounder Vic Lloyd, creator of its Sensei brand, previously spent ten years at Leaders 1354. DAVON CLARK

Can ComplexCon do justice to Chicago streetwear?

Leaders from two generations of the local fashion scene talk about the convention's pros and cons.

By DAVON CLARK

For its fourth year, the culture convention of style, arts, and music outlet Complex has branched out into a second home in Chicago. ComplexCon is coming thousands of miles from its home in Long Beach, California, bringing national attention with it—and the members of Chicago's groundbreaking creative community have been feeling the weight of that attention differently. Some of them are reluctant to celebrate, not least because they've been doing for decades what ComplexCon is attempting for a weekend in July: as the convention's website puts it, it aims to bring together “pop culture, music, art, food, sports, innovation, activism, and education.”

A swarm of vendors, artists, and designers will descend upon McCormick Place on Saturday and Sunday, July 20 and 21. Creatives from multiple mediums—especially streetwear, the event's center of gravity—have been working on presentations and collabs, hoping to show off their work on an international stage that's crowded with influencers, all of them trying to find pop culture's next pivot. Among the countless exhibits, talks, and performances are exclusive merch releases, food pop-ups, and various displays and “experiences” from more than 100 brands. For every old, established company with no special connection to Chicago—Old Spice, Hennessy, Toyota—there's a hometown heavy hitter such as rap-

per Taylor Bennett, visual artist Sentrock, and DJ King Marie. And they're not the only ones getting ready to showcase what the Chicago art scene has to offer: the exciting young locals involved with ComplexCon include graphic designer and artist Brandon Breaux (the prime mover of the Invisible Space at 85th and Cottage Grove) and fashion designer Sheila Rashid.

Anticipation has been building for months, and though the commotion is warranted, ComplexCon has met with a mixed reception from locals. Chicagoans know they're the ones who've put in the work that made the city a prime location for the event, and some of them worry that ComplexCon is just parachuting in

to capitalize on their efforts. I've talked to several local artists who, while they don't want to be quoted by name, feel the festival has fumbled its communications with the Chicago community. They say they don't know what's going on, and that ComplexCon has been reaching out to artists so late in the game that it can only piggyback on what they're already doing—which would result in what's basically a branding exercise, not a collaboration specific to the convention. If this is broadly true, that's a shame, because ComplexCon and local organizers share a goal: they both want to find the best way to exhibit the city's splendors while appealing to a broad audience.

One of those skeptical locals is Corey Gilkey, who founded and helps run Chicago clothing shop Leaders 1354. Opened in Hyde Park in 2002 and now operating out of a storefront in the West Loop, Leaders has been influencing fashion and culture all over the city for longer than most of its competitors have existed—all four founders of streetwear institution Fat Tiger Workshop, for instance, came through Leaders.

When I talked to Gilkey, it was a breezy Juneteenth morning, and he was feeling upbeat about that day's season opener for Box-



Gilkey outside another of his enterprises, Friistyle, a Bronzeville restaurant that began as a series of pop-ups specializing in “loaded” Belgian-style pommes frites. DAVON CLARK

ville, Chicago’s first shipping-container mall and street-food market. Cofounded by Gilkey and hosted by the Bronzeville Incubator under the 51st Green Line station, Boxville debuted in 2017, and during its inaugural summer it claims to have hosted 64 locally owned enterprises and more than 2,500 patrons. Since then the hyperlocal marketplace has grown to bring together even more Chicago entrepreneurs to serve visitors from Bronzeville and beyond.

But the news wasn’t all good. Many of Leaders’ previous collaborators, including ComplexCon darling Virgil Abloh, will be a part of the convention’s Chicago debut, but Leaders itself didn’t even get an invite.

“We weren’t approached—no e-mail, not a call,” Gilkey says. “You go to every other area, like New York and LA, and they’re gonna have

thing that needed to be done. They’re having an industry event about streetwear and sneakers and art and music. That’s dope—but all that shit starts with the independents.”

Fat Tiger Workshop cofounder Vic Lloyd, who created the brand’s Sensei arm, spent ten years at Leaders 1354, doing graphic design, running events, and pitching in with marketing. He’s DJing at the first Chicago ComplexCon, and his feelings about the event are significantly warmer. FTW, now in River West, launched on Black Friday 2013, and it follows in Leaders’ footsteps in its support for the community: the shop hosts local-focused events, develops spectacular collaborations with Chicago talent in all mediums, and keeps the same energy for its hometown despite its ascent to national renown.

“I started Sensei there a couple years ago at that store,” Lloyd says, referring to Fat Tiger’s previous location near Carpenter and Grand. “I was DJing before I got into fashion, but just as a hobby. It kinda became a necessity from throwing events. We was booking DJs and all that stuff, so one day I just decided to take it serious. I had a couple of homies that helped me out and gave me pointers along the way, and it turned into a thing I do too.”

Lloyd looks forward to the attention that will converge on the city the weekend of ComplexCon, which also includes the annual Chicago festival of international music-media outlet Pitchfork. For him, these worlds coming together is natural.

“Fashion, music, art . . . all of those things are a woven web. You can’t do one without the other. They all feed off each other,” he says. “It’s dope for something like ComplexCon to get into the city and showcase all those things and showcase it from a worldview, not just a local view. All those things go on every week here on a smaller level. You can always catch us doing something. Other shops doing stuff, like parties, pop-ups . . . it’s always stuff going

on, but this is the first time it really got put on a huge stage.”

Gilkey might counter that Leaders 1354 has been logging the hours to make Chicago its own big stage for 17 years, and that for most of that time national outlets have neglected the city’s talent. He suspects that once the fest is over and gone, there won’t be any lasting benefits to locals. He doesn’t see ComplexCon hiring enough Chicago people or engaging with the scene here.

“We train youth and mentor them to be successful,” Gilkey says. “We want to give them the tools to be entrepreneurs one day. Businessmen, entrepreneurs, graphic designers, photographers, videographers—and none of this will be showcased at ComplexCon. Who’s gonna do the photography for them? Who’s gonna video and edit them? It’s gonna be someone from LA. That’s millennial culture and social-media culture right now—who has the hype? Who has the most? Instead of thinking, ‘Let’s give this guy an opportunity. Let’s shine on him for his work of ten, or 15, or even five years capturing Chicago. And introducing us to Chicago.’ We’re the heart of America. Everything goes through here.”

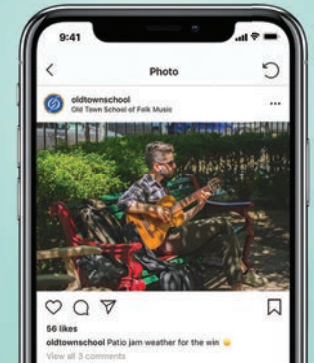
The influence of Leaders’ Hyde Park boutique will inevitably flow through ComplexCon, even though the shop won’t be participating. Gilkey has helped cultivate a lineage of stars in the fashion industry without getting national love for it, but the festival’s arrival in Chicago has become a catalyst for creatives—and he sees this as spurring a change that’s more in line with his goals. Folks left out of the big show, he says, are extra driven to collaborate with one another.

“Complex could have done some cool things,” he says. “But remember, they’re hoping the big companies come and showcase Chicago, when it’s the smaller guys without a Nike and Adidas account that are really runnin’ the streets or really hiring people. And the streets love them and what they represent. I wanna say thank you, ComplexCon, because what you did is inspire these kids to work together. I’m getting texts like, ‘Aye man, we gonna do this T-shirt. Let’s work together—we gon’ do this T-shirt, we gon’ showcase all the brands that’ve been supporting it. We look up to Leaders, we look up to Fashion Geek, and for you to not be here . . . it’s all on us now.’”

It remains to be seen if ComplexCon’s expansion to Chicago was a good decision, but there’s no doubt that the city’s influence on global fashion and culture is on the rise. ComplexCon may not be ready for Chicago, but Chicago is ready for anything.

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COMPLEXCON DAY ONE

With live music from Ella Mai, Tobi Lou, Lucki (see page TK), Young Guru, King Marie, Smoko Ono, Big Once, and DJ Cut-Cuz. Sat 7/20, 11 AM-8 PM, McCormick Place, 2301 S. King, \$80-\$360, all ages

COMPLEXCON DAY TWO

With live music from Schoolboy Q, Taylor Bennett, Saweetie, Austin Mills, Vic Lloyd, Siobhan Bell, Boi Jeanius, Joe Freshgoods, and Rae Chardonnay. Sun 7/21, 11 AM-8 PM, McCormick Place, 2301 S. King, \$80-\$360, all ages

some sort of independence around that. For people not to be offered that here is really a slap in the face, almost.”

He acknowledges that ComplexCon does important work, but he doesn’t know how it could overlook Leaders. “They’re the Super Bowl of streetwear and luxury and culture. They market themselves to be that,” he says. “I’m not gonna dis them for that—it’s some-

The Reader's guide to the 2019 Pitchfork Music Festival

Even on a weekend it shares with the Silver Room Block Party and the debut of ComplexCon Chicago, Pitchfork stands out for its farsighted, eclectic bookings.

By LEOR GALIL

PITCHFORK MUSIC FESTIVAL

Fri 7/19 through Sun 7/21, box office at 10 AM, gates at noon, music at 1 PM, Union Park, 1501 W. Randolph, \$95 per day, three-day pass \$200, +Plus pass single day \$185, three-day \$400, all ages



Saba on the Red Stage at last year's Pitchfork Music Festival © TIM NAGLE

On Friday, the Pitchfork Music Festival kicks off its 14th year—technically its 15th, if you count the Pitchfork-curated Intonation Music Festival in 2005. Since late 2015, Pitchfork the website has been owned by publishing conglomerate Condé Nast, but fortunately that hasn't affected the distinctiveness of Pitchfork the festival. It stands out even in a city where every summer weekend seems to have half a dozen fests—this year, for instance, Pitchfork overlaps not only with the Silver Room's long-running block party but also the debut of ComplexCon Chicago, a two-day music and fashion event presented by Complex magazine.

The Pitchfork festival rests its reputation on unconventional lineups, which reflect the

editorial site's tastes and often showcase acts that don't get love from bigger fests. This year's bill has plenty of curveballs—where else can you see the venerable AACM Great Black Music Ensemble, assembled by its namesake Chicago avant-garde collective, within a few hours of Maryland rap queen Rico Nasty and Minnesota indie-rock elders Low? For every surprise, though, there's a familiar face: the 13 returning acts on the 2019 lineup include Philly rocker Kurt Vile, who's making his fourth appearance (and that 12 leaves out LA rapper JPEGmafia, who played at Pitchfork's first Midwinter fest in February).

For the past few years Pitchfork has done good work booking locals, and this year I count 12—though I'm including Freddie Gibbs, who's from Gary, Indiana. (Bitchin Bajas

were added late, replacing London singer-songwriter Tirzah.) A little more than half of the 42 acts on the bill are women or fronted by women, including headliners Haim and Robyn. This shouldn't be a remarkable achievement, but most other festivals have done little to address the gender disparity in their lineups.

This year Pitchfork debuted a more complicated pricing system for general admission tickets and +Plus passes: everything got progressively more expensive between March and the week of the festival, with single-day tickets passing through three price tiers and three-day tickets through four. If you wanted your GA passes to cost what they did last year (\$75 per day or \$175 for all three), you would've had to buy them before May 31. At this point, they're \$95 per day.

Pitchfork Radio will stream live from the festival grounds for the first time, and poets from Louder Than a Bomb will read between sets on the Blue Stage. Otherwise the festival's nonmusical attractions—including the CHIRP Record Fair, the Renegade Craft Fair, Flatstock, the Book Fort, and the Kids Zone—remain the same. Union Park is within the 50-square-mile zone of the city's new pilot program for shareable electric scooters, but don't try to bring one in—even old-fashioned foot-powered scooters are prohibited. Pitchforkmusicfestival.com has everything else you need to know in advance. [\[A\]](#)

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08/23 - AMERICAN AQUARIUM
08/27 - ALEX LAHEY
09/05 - JOE HERTLER
09/06 - SHEER MAG

09/07 - EZRA FURMAN
09/13 - SLAUGHTER BEACH, DOG
09/15 - FONTAINES D.C.
09/16 - GIRL IN RED
09/17 - BORIS
09/18 - DANIEL NORGREN
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SCHUBAS TAVERN

Pitchfork's sounds of Chicago

This year the festival booked enough acts from in and around Chicago to fill one side of a 90-minute cassette.

By LEOR GALIL



JOHN GARRISON

The best mixtapes are eclectic, showcasing a broad range of styles and artists and thus encouraging listeners to explore unfamiliar catalogs. This year Pitchfork booked so many acts from in and around Chicago that one song from each would fill a side of a 90-minute cassette, so I made a streamable mix (posted at chicagoreader.com) for the occasion. All 12 artists have released music in the past year, and it's almost all available on Spotify—the lone exception, the AACM Great

Black Music Ensemble's *Live at the Currency Exchange, Volume 1*, can be purchased at their performances.

1. RIC WILSON, "Dan Ryan Traffic"

In a little more than a minute, Wilson delivers a heartfelt ode to those who've fallen victim to alcoholism or gun violence or been marginalized by Chicago's segregationist practices. It's bittersweet but ultimately hopeful.

Sat 7/20, 1:45-2:25 PM, Red Stage

2. LALA LALA, "I Get Cut"

Postpunk band Lala Lala gleefully twist anthemic indie rock into off-balance shapes, pelting it with quick rhythmic bursts to keep everybody on their toes. On the verses Lillie West sings with dry restraint about surviving trauma with the help of love, and on the chorus she hollers with enough force to suggest she can overcome anything.

Sat 7/20, 1-1:40 PM, Green Stage

3. FREDDIE GIBBS, "Cataracts"

Freddie Gibbs artfully mixes joy and sorrow in a track about chasing the sort of vices that can upend lives, and as usual he delivers his insights at a blistering pace with plenty of swing. For the instrumental, producer Madlib sampled "Teach Me How" by Ohio soul band Wee, which appears on their 1977 album *You Can Fly on My Aeroplane*, reissued in 2008 by the Numero Group.

Sat 7/20, 6:30-7:15 PM, Blue Stage

4. WHITNEY, "Giving Up"

The first single from the country-soul band's forthcoming second album, *Forever Turned Around*, has everything you could hope for from a Whitney song: it delicately balances the somber and sweet as it climbs to a celebratory finish.

Sun 7/21, 6:15-7:15 PM, Green Stage

5. TASHA, "Kind of Love"

Singer-songwriter Tasha crafts indie-rock lullabies so calming they could help coffee get to sleep. On "Kind of Love" she maintains her tranquility even as she evokes the queasy excitement of a romance that can turn your stomach inside out.

Sun 7/21, 2:45-3:30 PM, Blue Stage

6. VALEE, "Yoppie"

The stylistically adventurous rapper radiates bliss even as he mirrors the slack energy of this track's dreamlike instrumental.

Fri 7/19, 3:20-4:10 PM, Red Stage

7. MAVIS STAPLES, "One More Change"

Pop music would be so different without Mavis Staples, and she's still flexing her creative muscles. When she leans into the earthiness of her voice on the chorus of the relaxed blues number "One More Change," she supercharges it with that special Staples gravitas.

Fri 7/19, 7:25-8:25 PM, Red Stage

8. DREEZY FEATURING JEREMIH, "Ecstasy"

Rapper-singer Dreezy recruited Chicago crooner Jeremih for her 2016 breakthrough single, "Body," and they rekindle its irresistible sensuality with "Ecstasy," off January's *Big Dreez*.

Dreezy: Sun 7/21, 1-1:40 PM, Green Stage

Jeremih: Sat 7/20, 7:45-8:30 PM, Blue Stage

9. GRAPETOOTH, "Trouble"

The indie-pop misfits marry dazed synths and a campfire acoustic-guitar melody for a song that evokes a euphoric late-summer night.

Fri 7/19, 4-4:45 PM, Blue Stage

10. BITCHIN BAJAS, "Planète T"

Experimental trio Bitchin Bajas first released this ambient track on 2015's *Transporteur* via French label Hands in the Dark, but Drag City reissued it last fall as part of a seven-CD retrospective. "Planète T" is gentle and absorbing, so that time feels inconsequential.

Sat 7/20, 2:45-3:30 PM, Blue Stage

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PITCHFORK



COURTESY PRIMARY WAVE

THE ISLEY BROTHERS
Sat 7/20, 8:30-9:50 PM,
Green Stage

Why haven't the Isley Brothers conquered the rock market?

The legendary R&B band can rock hard too, but they've never crossed over like Sly Stone or Prince.

By **JAMES PORTER**

Since 1959, when the Isley Brothers began their long string of hits with “Shout,” they’ve been a reliable R&B institution. They’re one of the few acts to break the top 50 on the pop charts at least once per decade from the 50s through the 90s—not even James Brown could make that claim, and he was at least as prolific. And during the period from 1969 till ’83, the Isleys really seemed to hit their stride. They had revived their T-Neck label (previously used for just three singles in the mid-60s) and rejuvenated their sound, alternating between hard funk and smooth ballads destined for the Baby Making Hall of Fame.

However, one side of the Isley Brothers’ career during this era consistently gets swept under the rug: their status as a hard-rock band. How often do you hear Isley songs on classic-rock radio? And “This Old Heart of

Mine” on Motown Monday doesn’t count.

When guitarist Ernie Isley joined the band in 1973, his atomic solos gave their music extra rock power. (In ’84, Ernie left to cofound Isley-Jasper-Isley, while lead singer Ron continued on as “the Isley Brothers featuring Ron Isley.” Ron and Ernie, the heart of the current lineup, reunited in 1991.) However, even prior to his arrival, the Isleys had used albums such as *Get Into Something* (1970) and *Givin’ It Back* (1971), coupled with gigs at the Bitter End, the Fillmore East, and other New York City venues, to signal that they were making serious moves toward the rock market. After all, these were the guys who’d helped give Jimi Hendrix his start in 1964. They were definitely “giving back” to rock, with their own distinct twist. The cover of their landmark 1975 album, *The Heat Is On*, shows them posing in a cloudbank of steam or smoke, a wall of amplifiers clearly

visible in the background. Tunes such as “That Lady” and “Live It Up” were clearly meant to give Led Zeppelin and the other big guns of rock some competition.

So why aren’t the Isley Brothers recognized as rock titans? These are multimillion-selling albums that would’ve sounded good on FM rock stations between Bad Company and Robin Trower. And it’s not just current-day classic-rock outlets that have neglected the Isleys: to hear the band tell it, even back in the day rock radio didn’t show them much love. In 1978, the late O’Kelly Isley complained to *Rolling Stone* that Fleetwood Mac and Boston “had a better shot at” rock fame because “they’re played constantly, once an hour and everywhere on 50,000-watt stations.” The Isleys themselves might’ve been in that same rotation, he speculated, “if the color of the skin was different.”

In that same interview, Ernie, long underrated as a hard-rock guitar genius, confirmed that the band’s shift to a rock-influenced sound was intentional: “Minus horns. Minus strings. Rock ‘n’ roll.” However, what worked for Sly Stone and Stevie Wonder (and later for Prince) somehow didn’t pan out for the Isleys. Their 1975 hit “Fight the Power,” with its reference to “all this bullshit going down,” was their answer to the music-industry thinking that kept the Isleys on the sidelines of the rock market. The “disco sucks” backlash that began in the late 70s hurt even rock-oriented Black artists, and the Isleys never did break down the barriers on FM rock stations. But they earned widespread respect regardless, and were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1992. Their career, now in its seventh decade, includes a solid comeback in the 2000s, and I’d like to think an up-tempo Isleys track would still liven up any classic-rock playlist. In the 1970s, the Isley Brothers made heavy metal you could dance to.

@JamesPorterCHI

All the world's onstage

Cate Le Bon, Black Midi, Ibeyi, and Chai are among the acts from abroad at Pitchfork this year.

By ANNA WHITE



Since the Pitchfork Music Festival's launch in 2006, its organizers have ensured that approximately a quarter of the lineup consists of artists from outside the U.S. This year is no exception, with nine international acts out of 41, including four of the top-billed performers: Robyn, Charli XCX, Belle & Sebastian, and Stereolab. (London singer-songwriter Tirzah canceled at the last minute.) Along with headliners from abroad, the fest is packed with lesser-known bands from around the world who are just as worthy of fans' attention and time.

Welsh singer **CATE LE BON** spent her first 30 years in the UK, but she doesn't necessarily think of herself as more "international" than her U.S. contemporaries. "I think most artists that tour are international artists," says Le Bon, an attitude that reflects an increasingly globally integrated music community. After 12 years and five albums, Le Bon took a hiatus from performing in 2017 and enrolled in a furniture design and building workshop in the UK's sleepy Lake District. "I just needed some time away from music to check in with my relationship with it, because I have been doing it for so long, and make sure my motives were in check," says Le Bon. "To really have the space to do that, I needed to fill my time with something else intensive." In woodworking, Le Bon found a sense of patience and deliberate action that she brings to her most recent album, *Reward* (Mexican Summer). Clear and steady, *Reward* has the ease and pace of a walk through the countryside.

London-based indie-rock four-piece **BLACK MIDI**, whose members are just 19 and 20 years old, released their first single on Bandcamp in 2018 and followed it this June with their debut full-length, *Schlagenheim* (Rough Trade). On the album, singer and guitarist Geordie Greep nasally sermonizes over a twitchy backdrop



that sounds as though the band were electrocuted midsession due to a miscalculation in power-supply wattage. Though the recordings carry the chaos of Black Midi's live performances, "The album is very intense, but also very delicate," says Greep. "We always try to have drama, theatricality. Tension and release, that's the name of the game."

IBEYI, French-Cuban twins you may recognize from Beyoncé's visual album, *Lemonade*, are among the acts this year who perform in multiple languages. The Diaz sisters' soulful, percussive songs feature lyrics in English, French, Spanish, and Yoruba, letting the melody dictate which language feels best. "It kind of happened really organically," says Lisa-Kaindé Diaz of the band's use of language. "I think it's because we are all of this—we are French, and Cuban, and we have strong Yoruba culture that runs in our family. We are all of

that, so really naturally our music is a reflection of what we are." Lisa says Pitchfork and the shows immediately following it might be Ibeyi's last performances for a while featuring just the two sisters, as their writing is shifting toward more complex arrangements that will require lineup changes. If fans want to see them before that happens, now is the time.

Another of this year's multilingual performers, **CHAI**, write in Japanese with additions in English, despite not speaking the language fluently quite yet. The band have always sought a global audience, with sights on winning a Grammy—a rare mind-set in the Japanese music scene, according to bassist Yuki. "A lot of Japanese music tends to only cater to the Japanese market, instead of worldwide," she says. "Other Japanese artists are overly catering to the overseas audiences and lose their identity." Chai occupy a space between the two

Clockwise from upper left: Chai, Cate Le Bon, Black Midi, Ibeyi. COURTESY THE ARTIST; IVANA KLIČKOVIĆ, DAVID UZOCHUKWU; DAN KENDALL

CHAI
Sat 7/20, 2:30-3:15 PM,
Green Stage

CATE LE BON
Sat 7/20, 3:20-4:10 PM,
Red Stage

BLACK MIDI
Sun 7/21, 2:30-3:15 PM,
Green Stage

IBEYI
Sun 7/21, 4-4:45 PM,
Blue Stage

extremes, looking outside their home country while retaining a sense of their individuality as a Japanese group. "I want to cherish anything that brings me energy," says drummer Yuna. The band cite boba tea, colorful clothing, and houseplants as inspirations for their playfully saccharine style of rock.

Though this year's Pitchfork lineup maintains the festival's typical ratio of international to U.S. artists, the unusually high proportion of headliners from abroad puts a sense of global connectivity at the forefront in a way previous years have not, reflecting an increasingly globalized contemporary music scene. These artists are the next wave of new music that everyone will be talking about—and Pitchfork is giving you the chance to make sure you're along for the ride. 

 @annnaclaire

What happens to the trash at Pitchfork?

And how does the festival stack up against its peers on the sustainability front?

By **DAVE CANTOR**

Environmental consciousness barely registered at the recent Democratic presidential debates, and climate-change deniers still seem comfortable ignoring science and evidence. But sustainability issues increasingly have come to bear on music festivals.

Pickathon, a boutique event held in Happy Valley, Oregon, just southeast of Portland, recently announced that it's aiming for zero waste, while noting that the goal is a bit lofty. In Somerset, England, the Glastonbury Festival has experimented with using only fully compostable packaging for sandwiches. And closer to home, Mamby on the Beach, which is moving to Montrose Beach for 2019, has to accommodate the endangered piping plovers that are laying eggs in the vicinity of the August event.

The Pitchfork Music Festival has been the steward of Union Park during several days each July for the past 14 years. But according

to the festival's planner, limitations in the area's infrastructure and a shortage of available services mean it isn't set to feature any new sustainability initiatives this year.

"It's Chicago, and it's also how the industry works," says event producer Mike Reed, discussing the festival's sustainability efforts. "Each region has its own issues, and across the board, I think there's not a unified approach to how this is supposed to go."

The Pitchfork Music Festival generates about 20 tons of waste in total each year, Reed says, and the percentage of it that gets recycled averages in the mid-40s. While this is vastly better than Chicago as a whole has ever managed, it's not extraordinary for a festival. At the Treefort Music Fest in Boise, Idaho, which in 2018 hosted around 24,000 people

over five days—less than half the number who attended Pitchfork last year—about 45 percent of waste is either composted or recycled, according to the event's sustainability coordinator.

Reed, a notable jazz drummer who also owns or co-owns Constellation and the Hungry Brain, says he frequently brings a bike with him to Union Park during the festival. He also notes the event's proximity to a bevy of public-transportation options as well as the ample bike parking available.

The Pitchfork festival, though, doesn't currently have a person overseeing sustainability, instead delegating the relevant tasks to several staffers who oversee other aspects of planning.

Stephanie Katsaros, founder and president of Chicago sustainability consultancy Bright Beat, says that can be a workable arrangement, depending on how deeply ingrained sustainability is in the planning process. She thinks the best way to mitigate waste at a festival is to have a dedicated person, contract or otherwise, to deal with the matter—but staffing is hardly the only issue that can significantly impact an event's ability to achieve sustainability.

"You are beholden to the local infrastructure that you can access—or your budget," she says. "The transportation footprint of taking something [out of the area for recycling] is unwise. You learn the infrastructure first and build your plan—your purchasing, your logistics—around it."

Katsaros says that it's achievable but "really challenging" for an event to divert 90 percent of its waste from landfills: "40 to 60 percent is real-world."

At Pitchfork, the onus of materials procurement and composting is left to vendors, who work on a relatively small scale. Reed says they're briefed on the festival's expectations regarding sustainability. He points to beer sold in cans, as opposed to plastic cups, as a positive step for the event's waste management.

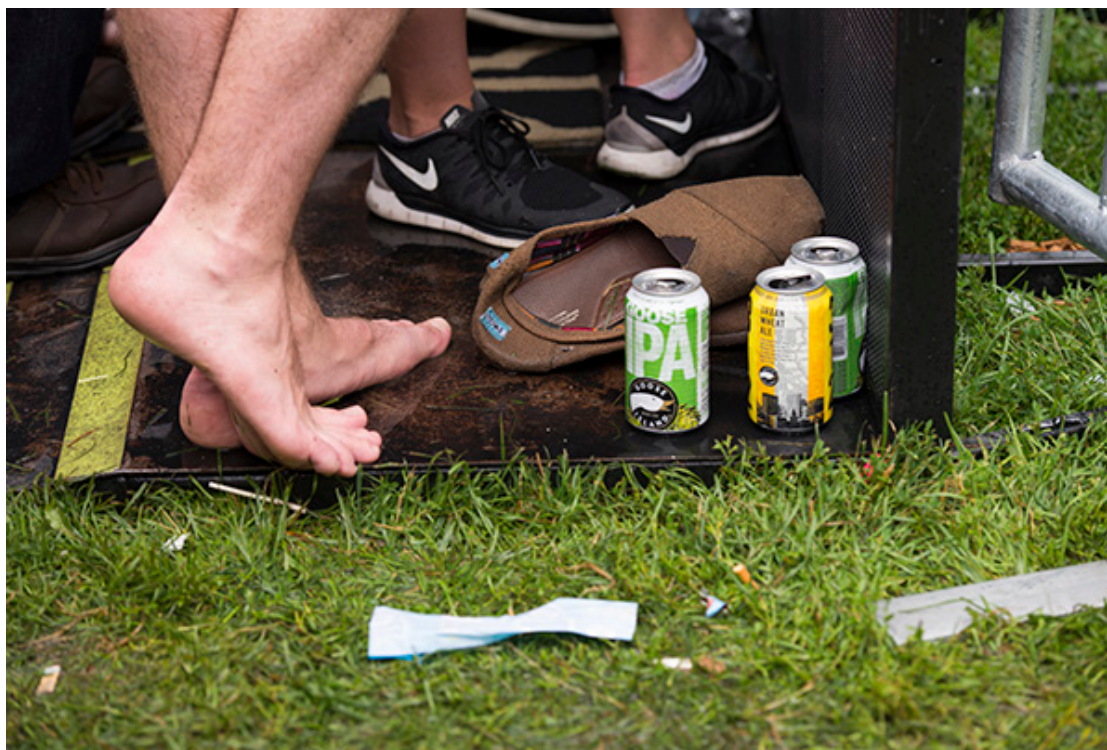
"Recyclable and compostable is nice," Katsaros says, "but we need to be moving toward reusable." Steps to get there could include banning plastics, devising incentives for people to bring their own cups or water bottles from home, and implementing a food-waste plan aimed at festivalgoers.

Waste Management of Illinois is working with Pitchfork to deal with its trash. A spokesperson says that the company will collect food waste at the "back of the house," and that if the event's organizers want to give festgoers the option to compost, that's available.

The market continues to help define new initiatives—biodegradable body glitter, for instance, or recyclable cardboard tents for festivals that offer camping—and Katsaros sounds a reassuring note.

"I appreciate that there is coverage of festivals, and there seems to be notable comments on sustainability," she says. "There's definitely more awareness than in 2010." 

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Valee runs up a high score

In recognition of the Chicago rapper's Pitchfork debut, the Reader attempts to quantify his braggadociousness.

By LEOR GALIL

Chicago has plenty of rappers with distinctive styles, but none is quite like Valee. As he became a national phenomenon last year, several marquee names tried to replicate his nimble, staccato flow, including Nicki Minaj, Smokepurpp, and Tyler, the Creator. But mere imitation can't capture Valee's charm and skill—or his alchemical combination of nonchalance and boastfulness.

VALEE
Fri 7/19, 3:20-4:10 PM,
Red Stage

This brings me to the very silly reason this piece exists. I got to wondering if I could devise a quantitative method to measure Valee's strengths—specifically his braggadociousness. Harnessing the probably irrelevant power of math, I rated the boastfulness of each of four verses on a ten-point scale, then multiplied that number by the skillfulness of his performance, also rated on a ten-point scale. (You may disagree with my scores, but you're wrong.) Then I divided that product by the time it took him to deliver those bars, thus arriving at a hard number: units of braggadociousness per second. I consider this method completely unassailable, and will not be taking questions at this time.

"Two 16's"

Verse: Hope you don't run up, bitch, I'll toe-tag you / Shoot you five times, Christian Louboutin sneaks / Five racks, lean was gone, refill that / Flow mad sticky, spill that Louis Vuitton print wallet, hanging / From my garment bag, Cuban link

Boastfulness: 6/10

Skillfulness: 10/10

Time: 12 seconds

Units of braggadociousness per second (BPS): 5.00



Valee at Lollapalooza in 2018. ALISON GREEN

"John Doe"

Verse: In the two-door, color egg yolk / You can miss me with that shit, you ain't talkin' 'bout bread, though / I'm with my Hispanic bitch, but I'm not her man, though / Got two dirty sticks, I look like *Commando* / And I stay ten toes, I don't gotta stand, though / I pop Addies by the four, I don't fuck with Xans, though / Met that bitch in January, but her name ain't Jan, though / I might have to toe-tag you, now your name is John Doe

Boastfulness: 8/10

Skillfulness: 7/10

Time: 22 seconds

BPS: 2.55

"Womp Womp"

Verse: Asked my mama for bread, she told me "Uh-uh" / That's the day I went out to get my bread up, uh-huh / T-shirt Vlone, leave the coupe runnin', won't be long / Chinese food, wonton, I might as well try that one time

Boastfulness: 7/10

Skillfulness: 8/10

Time: 12 seconds

BPS: 4.67

"I Was on the Block"

Verse: I was sippin' red with my bitch the other day / These Amiri jeans cost me 2.5K / I know all my ex-bitches feel like shit today / I pull up in old-schoolers, runnin' rich today

Boastfulness: 8/10

Skillfulness: 6/10

Time: 13 seconds

BPS: 3.69

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Pitchfork finally makes its own pop moment

Robyn, Sky Ferreira, Haim, and Charli XCX aim a little to the left of the Top 40—and give the Union Park crowd something to dance about.

By JUSTIN CURTO

When Robyn first played Pitchfork in 2010, she was the closest thing to a mainstream pop artist the festival had ever booked. That day, her glistening dance music stood out on a stage whose lineup also featured the relatively hard-edged sounds of rapper El-P and rockers Modest Mouse. But her first Pitchfork booking seemed to open the door for the festival to include more pop in that vein: Sky Ferreira in 2013, Grimes in 2014, and most prominently Carly Rae Jepsen in 2016. In some ways this phenomenon mirrors the way Robyn's career has opened doors for pop singers to break out of prescribed cookie-cutter molds. "Robyn has definitely been part of paving the way for pop stars who fall a little to the left of the Top 40 norm," her disciple Charli XCX told the *Guardian* last year.

What began in 2010 culminates in a pop moment at Pitchfork this year—Robyn and sister-pop trio Haim headline Sunday and Friday, respectively, while Charli XCX closes out the Red Stage on Sunday and Ferreira returns Friday to perform much-anticipated new music for the first time. After years of Pitchfork lineups that relied largely on remarkable yet dismal indie rock, with the festival's bookings achieving gender parity for the second year in a row, there couldn't be a better time for the Union Park crowd to dance to music by these women.



Like many pop stars before them, the **HAIM** sisters first gained attention for their ability to condense stories into four catchy minutes. Their 2013 debut, *Days Are Gone*, featured enough brilliant bite-size pop songs to cause rifts among critics: Was "Falling" Haim's best of the year, or was it "If I Could Change Your Mind"? No, it was definitely "The Wire," a polished track on which lead singer Danielle shares vocals with Este and Alana. It's easy to see these Pitchfork newcomers as a rock band—they draw heavily from Fleetwood Mac—but they follow a pop blueprint. It's undeniable once you listen to "Want You Back," a standout from their second album, 2017's *Something to Tell You*—good luck getting its soaring chorus out of your head.

In 2013, the previous time **SKY FERREIRA** played Pitchfork, she was 21 years old and had



already released one of the decade's definitive pop songs: "Everything Is Embarrassing," widely praised for the muted feel that makes it stand out from typical pop fare. That fall she released her rough-around-the-edges full-length, *Night Time, My Time*, and then entered more than five years of major-label purgatory with repeated delays to its follow-up, *Masochism*. Earlier this year, she released "Downhill Lullaby," the album's brooding, orchestral lead single, which will surely make its live debut at Pitchfork. Unlike "Everything Is Embarrassing," you can barely dance to it—yet it's possibly one of the best pop songs of the year, not least because Ferreira made it on her terms.

Clockwise from upper left: Haim, Sky Ferreira, Charli XCX, Robyn

PHOTOS: COURTESY CHUFF MEDIA; COURTESY THE ARTIST; MARCUS COOPER; HEJJI SHIN

SKY FERREIRA

Fri 7/19, 4:15-5:10 PM,
Green Stage

HAIM

Fri 7/19, 8:30-9:50 PM,
Green Stage

CHARLI XCX

Sun 7/21, 7:25-8:25 PM,
Red Stage

ROBYN

Sun 7/21, 8:30-9:50 PM,
Green Stage

CHARLI XCX has made her name by pushing the boundaries of pop outward. Her most recent full-length, 2017's aptly titled *Pop 2*, is a mixtape disguised as an album, and its dissonant closer, "Track 10," was the clearest vision at the time of how pop music in the late 2010s could sound. (Her third album, *Charli*, is due in September.) Like Robyn and to some extent Ferreira, Charli XCX leans into the queer fan base that first embraced her club-inspired music. Collaboration defines her approach, and she's given space in her music to a greater number of LGBTQ+ artists—trans and non-binary vocalists, openly HIV-positive artists, drag performers—than most of today's supposed pop allies combined. It all feels natural, never forced, just as her futuristic, innovative pop maintains its humanity.

ROBYN told Caryn Ganz in 2010 that the three central pillars of a pop song are love, the club, and feeling like an outsider. Eight years later, Jayson Greene called it "the Robyn Feeling: sad, exultant, vanquished, triumphant." Regardless of how it's put, Robyn's songs have melancholy hearts, despite the urgency of their push to the dance floor. At a festival that doesn't shy away from sadness—it booked the War on Drugs against Fleet Foxes last year, for instance, and hosted A Tribe Called Quest's first performance without Phife Dog in 2017—she fits right in. But unlike those artists, Robyn is also about the catharsis of dancing.

Not just with Robyn but also with Charli, Ferreira, and Haim, Pitchfork is sending a clear message: it's time we danced about something. 🎶

PICK OF THE WEEK

If you only see one act at ComplexCon Chicago, make it peerless local rapper Lucki



VIN M ROMERO

LUCKI

Part of the first day of the inaugural ComplexCon Chicago (see page 30). Sat 7/20, 11 AM-10 PM, McCormick Place, 2301 S. Martin Luther King, \$80-\$300.

COME NOVEMBER, the music press will start churning out “decade in review” pieces. Though I can’t predict their contents (and frankly don’t want to), I anticipate there’ll be several listicles ranking Chicago rappers—and any such roundup would be incomplete without Lucki Camel Jr. He dropped his debut mixtape, *Alternative Trap*, in 2013, and though he was just 17 at the time, he already showed a tremendous gift for drawing in listeners with his storytelling. Sought-after music supervisor Scott Vener, known for his work on HBO’s *Entourage* and *How to Make It in America*, soon became his manager, and a year later Lucki dropped “Stevie Wonder,” a track featuring Chance the Rapper and coproduced by drill architect Young Chop. By the middle of the decade he’d faded from the limelight as he struggled with drug addiction, but through the ups and downs he found focus in music, even steering it in a new direction: retaining his sharp observational lyrics and the drowsy delivery that makes him sound like he could get lost between the beats, he grew more succinct and developed a lived-in hardness in his tone. Lucki’s lackadaisical flow and predilection for confronting the dark, intimate details of drug addiction and broken romance set a template for Soundcloud rappers to come, but he’s always seemed a world apart from that scene (and any other). As Soundcloud rap blew up in 2017, he dropped *Watch My Back*, a mixtape filled with nervy, powerful songs that are sometimes so brief that their sudden ends seem to cut Lucki off just as he gets going. He’s all of 23 years old now, and in February, he self-released *Freewave 3*, whose forceful, anxious songs show that he’s on track to make fascinating, inspiring music for a long time to come. —LEOR GALIL

THURSDAY18

ORCHESTRAL INTERPRETATIONS OF J DILLA
BY MIGUEL ATWOOD-FERGUSON *Kenny Keys opens. 6:30 PM, Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, 201 E. Randolph. FREE*

Shortly after the 2006 death of James Dewitt Yancey, best known as J Dilla, Los Angeles multi-instrumentalist, arranger, composer, and producer Miguel Atwood-Ferguson began creating orchestral homages to the Detroit hip-hop producer and rapper. Though Yancey had spoken publicly about his health struggles, his passing at age 32 (due to complications from lupus and a rare blood disorder) left the musical world mourning the loss of a beloved artist and his unrealized potential. Atwood-Ferguson ranks Yancey as a genius on the level of Mozart and Beethoven, with a body of seminal work whose complex, unexpected rhythms have established him as an extraordinary producer and innovator. Yancey was born into a family with a strong musical tradition—his mother was a singer, his father and uncle were professional musicians, and his grandfather was a pianist in the silent film industry—and he received formal training in piano and cello from an early age. Accordingly, his music evinces a compositional complexity that lends itself well to orchestral settings. Adapting hip-hop pieces to classical instrumentation can raise the hackles of all kinds of purists, including those who believe that string sections belong to “high culture” and those who think the process irreparably alters the relationship between producers and their source materials (the famous hook from Stan Getz and Luiz Bonfá’s bossa nova “Saudade Vem Correndo,” which Yancey sampled in the Pharcyde’s “Runnin,” necessarily works differently when played live). However, the four tracks on Atwood-Ferguson’s 2009 EP *Suite for Ma Dukes* (a collaboration with Carlos Niño, named for Yancey’s mother) are more like musical dialogues between him and Yancey, and they’re full of surprising nuances and textures. Atwood-Ferguson’s career has been marked by bridge building between genres—he’s worked with avant-garde, classical, hip-hop, pop, electronica, and jazz ensembles. This concert promises to be a revelatory experience: to prepare his orchestral arrangements, Atwood-Ferguson meticulously analyzed Yancey’s pieces and re-created the melodies, harmonies, and bass lines from the samples in the original recordings—all without sacrificing the head-nodding grooves in J Dilla’s legendary beats. Atwood-Ferguson’s luscious classical reimaginings of these beloved songs, broadcast across Jay Pritzker Pavilion by its magnificent sound system, should wonderfully illuminate the breadth, depth, and complexity of James Dewitt Yancey’s work. —CATALINA MARIA JOHNSON

COSMO SHELDRAKE *Odetta Hartman opens. 7:30 PM, Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, sold out.*

If you think the album title *The Much Much How How and I* is whimsical and amusing, you’ll probably love the fey, fabulous, and hokey music of its creator, London composer and multi-instrumentalist Cosmo Sheldrake. On his 2018 full-length debut,

released by Transgressive Records, Sheldrake doesn’t quite attain the cracked genius of oddball predecessors such as Syd Barrett or Brian Wilson, but he never defaults to the worst excesses of Paul McCartney either. The songs are filled with hurdy-gurdy carousel rhythms and clever instrumentation; “Wriggle” opens playfully with frolicking woodwinds, which settle into a burping march as Sheldrake delivers Donovan-worthy doggerel. “Hey ho, where did you go? / Did you wriggle or roll? / Did you giggle or grumble through?” “Axolotl” could almost be a *Beach Boys Love You* outtake, with a slow galumphing frog beat that’s delightfully mismatched with the ravishing background harmonies—it sounds like trying to “squeeze a right-hand foot into a left-hand shoe,” as Sheldrake sings. Most interesting, though, is “Mind of Rocks,” a collaboration with British vocal-loop artist Bunty, which drifts into shoegazey dream pop while maintaining Sheldrake’s signature sound. It’s an encouraging indication that his willful eccentricities might lumber and flop into less categorizable weirdness at some point in the future. —NOAH BERLATSKY

FRIDAY19

JAY BOLOTIN *Girls of the Golden West opens. 6 PM, Hideout (on the porch), 1354 W. Wabansia, \$10. 21+*

Few potential legends have been more grievously overlooked than singer-songwriter Jay Bolotin. You don’t have to take my word for it: the Kentucky-raised artist has written songs for Porter Wagoner (Dolly Parton’s ex), Dan Fogelberg, and David Allan Coe, among many others, and has earned praise from Americana greats such as Kris Kristofferson, Mickey Newbury, and Merle Haggard. Luckily for us, Bolotin’s visibility has been boosted by a few recent releases, including a track on the Numero Group’s 2009 compilation *Wayfaring Strangers: Lonesome Heroes*. That song, “Dear Father,” comes from Bolotin’s self-titled 1970 debut LP, an obscurity that was reissued by Locust Music in 2010. And last year, the esteemed Delmore label (which has put out archival releases from Karen Dalton, Love, and Gary Stewart) released the excellent *No One Seems to Notice That It’s Raining*, which compiles demos from 1970 to 1975 that cement Bolotin’s credentials as a “been there, done that” songwriter of surprising depth and versatility. As he reflected to *Hand/Eye Magazine* in 2012, “I take some pride in the fact that the record companies would say to me you’ve got ten ideas in that song. Go back and make it one. I couldn’t, though.” Bolotin has rightfully been compared to Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, and like their work his country-tinged songs are complex and sublimely poetic as well as sparse and incredibly catchy. A good example is the multihued tune “Traveler,” which Bolotin says caused Kristofferson to exclaim, “A lot of people have been trying to write that [song] for a long time and you did.” Bolotin’s talents don’t end with songwriting either—his visual art, mostly woodcuts, has been displayed all over the world, and he plans to adapt his portfolio *The Book of Only Enoch* into a film. He’s scoring it with guitarist and composer Bill Frisell, and it will feature voices by the likes of Will Oldham and ➔



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DJ Phil COURTESY THE ARTIST

continued from 39

famed UK actor Michael York. Bolotin lives in Cincinnati now, and this rare, intimate show is his first in Chicago in more than 40 years. If you miss it, you'll be denying yourself the opportunity to be in the presence of a true underground hero and warrior. —STEVE KRAKOW

BILLY BRANCH & THE SONS OF BLUES See also *Saturday, 9 PM, Rosa's Lounge, 3420 W. Armitage, \$15-\$20. 21+*

Blues tributes are too often dire affairs—note-for-note reworkings of timeworn ideas and riffs that betray an almost puritanical obsession with “authenticity.” That approach, of course, dishonors the spirit of the music it purports to celebrate—Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, and Elmore James, all of whom attract frequent tributes, weren’t purists or revivalists but instead radically reimagined blues tradition and took it to places it had never been before. Harpist Billy Branch, who learned his craft from some of Chicago’s most legendary postwar bluesmen, honors his mentors in exactly this way: having mastered their tonal attacks and improvisational ideas, he uses them as springboards for his own fresh imaginings. Often he reworks the tunes into virtually new creations, with the revolutionary spirit of the originals infused into every note bend, squall, and upward-arching improvisational flourish. That’s the approach Branch takes on his latest CD, *Roots and Branches: The Songs of Little Walter* (Alligator). Little Walter Jacobs is universally acknowledged as the premier harmonica genius of the postwar era, and Branch revisits some of his best-known songs as well as a few relative obscurities. He re-creates Walter’s tone with almost eerie verisimilitude while updating his themes with rhythmically aggressive, harmonically exploratory brio, pushed further by the rock-tinged eclecticism of his band, the Sons of Blues. In other words, Branch plays as if history itself were his instrument, and rather than use it as a crutch, he makes it a tool—a way to extract new riches from venerable lodes. —DAVID WHITEIS

CATE LE BON *Cate Le Bon also performs at the Pitchfork Music Festival; see page 35. 10 PM, Constellation, 3111 N. Western, sold out. 18+*

Cate Le Bon makes pleasant weirdo pop music. It’s not so experimental that you couldn’t imagine it on mainstream radio, and in fact her songs have been used in TV shows, including the award-winning comedy-drama *Transparent* and the British rich-kid reality show *Made in Chelsea*. Le Bon’s lyrics come across like they’re borrowed from poems jotted in the journal of a highly sensitive person—if that person had died and come back to haunt their hometown. On “Daylight Matters,” the first single from her May 2019 album, *Reward* (Mexican Summer), Le Bon sings, “Why do they stick when your lips read like stone? / Mouthing the lines, returning the air / And I’m never gonna feel them again.” *Reward* is an album full of these ghostly lines, punctuated by newly lush but ultimately true-to-Le Bon arrangements with piano-based melodies; none of its songs are over-the-top dazzling, but it’s still worth a listen. Though the stark “Miami” gave me pause during my first few plays—especially the strong Welsh accent in Le Bon’s repeated pronunciation of the title—what finally sold me was its keyboard runs, along with the wistful lines “Falling skies that people uphold / Move with me / Love neglected by reward, OK.” By contrast, Le Bon’s 2013 album, *Mug Museum*, stepped into stranger and angrier moments, such as the organ-led dirge “Mirror Me” and the Velvet Underground-inspired heartbreaker “I Think I Knew.” The latter is a duet with fellow indie weirdo Perfume Genius (aka Mike Hadreas), the kind of collaboration that shows Le Bon at her best—and thankfully she does it again on the *Reward* track “Magnificent Gestures,” which features guest vocalist Kurt Vile and Le Bon’s voice settling into its full odd-bird potential. Though her Constellation show is sold out, fans can also catch Le Bon at the Pitchfork Music Festival, where, with any luck, the spirit of the occasion will inspire her to fully feel out her most outre leanings. —SALEM COLLO-JULIN

SATURDAY20

BILLY BRANCH & THE SONS OF BLUES See Friday, 9 PM, Rosa's Lounge, 3420 W. Armitage, \$15-\$20. 21+

BLACK MIDI Black Midi also perform at the Pitchfork Music Festival; see page 35. Ono opens. 9 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, sold out. 21+

London quartet Black Midi have been getting lots of good press, including an ecstatic Pitchfork review of their 2019 debut, *Schlagenheim* (Rough Trade). It's not hard to see why: the band deftly reference the spiky, difficult, complicated music of edgy rock geniuses such as Wire, Sonic Youth, and King Crimson without sounding directly derivative of any of them. The vocals of singer-guitarist Geordie Greep are as itchy adenoidal as those of the Violent Femmes' Gordon Gano as he wails semi-articulate lyrics that occasionally disintegrate—such as on “Ducter,” where he declares, “It will never break me,” then spits out a series of yodeling chipmunk yips. Drummer Morgan Simpson is a prog monster who provides spastic blasts of lurching math-rock rhythms while Greep and fellow guitarist Matt Kwasniewski-Kelvin squall and jerk, creating a sound that lies somewhere between the Talking Heads and thrash metal. Black Midi's songs are clever and varied: “953” flips between metal blare and meditative slow sections, like some of Nirvana's most iconic tracks. The lengthy “Western” pulses around the liquid bass line of Cameron Picton, with a tempo that slows down and speeds up to accommodate a tasty dance-groove break and what sounds like a banjo section. Though the “next big thing” hype surrounding Black Midi is perhaps a bit much for the band to live up to at this point in their career, these young musicians are very talented, and in a short time they've already become famous for their energetic, razor-tight live shows. —**NOAH BERLATSKY**

DJ PHIL RP Boo headlines; DJ Spinn, Gant-Man, and DJ Phil open. 10 PM, Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark, \$16-\$20. 21+

Footwork is often characterized by aggressive sounds and high speeds, but Chicago producer and Teklife member DJ Phil fills in the music's framework with remarkable restraint. In the solo recordings he's dropped on the Web over the past few years, he uses samples to set the mood, often providing them with so much breathing room that nothing else filters into the song for long stretches. From there he uses his nuanced touch to tweak the audio just enough to let listeners know that a familiar melody is about to be transformed. On “Close 2 You VIP,” his remix of Dreezy's hit “Close to You,” Phil slowly builds multidirectional rhythms into the track's foundation, allowing footwork's muscular thump to engage with the sumptuousness of the source material. His latest single, “Drunk VIP,” is based on a complicated patchwork quilt of samples, but it's so tranquil that even his minimal percussive attacks give it an electrifying boost. —**LEOR GALIL**

GALCHER LUSTWERK 8 PM, Cerise rooftop at Virgin Hotel, 203 N. Wabash. 21+ **FREE**

Cleveland native Galcher Lustwerk (who prefers to leave his birth name unknown) raps and produces deep-house instrumentals, but you can't properly describe his music as some combination of house and hip-hop (and he absolutely does not make “hip-house”). Now based in New York, Lustwerk primarily appears interested in spellbinding grooves, in which he siphons trancelike qualities from laid-back sounds outside of electronic music. On last year's 200% *Galcher* (Lustwerk Music) he works mellow jazz sax and modern funk bass into his cool house instrumentals. He's got a flair for skeletal melodies, and manages to make his tracks feel lavish even when the only sound is the drum on “Idhouse” murmuring like a heartbeat. He nestles his vocals into his beats, rapping at a volume just above a whisper; on “Template” he murmurs so quietly you can ➔



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GARRETT DAVID
MOON BOOTS

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 Album Release Party with
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 JORDAN FIELDS
 ANDREW EMIL
 COLIN BOARDWAY

FRIDAY JUL 19
 Official Pitchfork Aftershow
 TITLE TK DJS
 & SASHA NO DISCO

SATURDAY JUL 20
 Teklife with
 RP BOO / DJ SPINN
 GANT-MAN / DJ PHIL

SUNDAY JUL 21
 Queen! with
 MICHAEL SERAFINI
 GARRETT DAVID
 BRAXTON HOLMES

continued from 41

practically hear him lick his lips between verses, as though he's falling into a dreamlike state induced by his own music. The chugging rhythms of "Life" propel a brief rap about the drive to find a partner, buy property, and have children, and Lustwerk's ambiguous lyrics and calming monotone add to the hypnotizing feel—whether you aspire to that lifestyle or not. —LEOR GALIL

LUCKI See *Pick of the Week*, page 39. Part of the first day of ComplexCon Chicago (see page 30) with Ella Mai, Tobi Lou, Young Guru, King Marie, Smoko Ono, Big Once, and DJ Cut-Cuz. Sat 7/20, 11 AM-10 PM, McCormick Place, 2301 S. Martin Luther King, \$80-\$300. [📍](#)

MONDAY22

SICK GAZELLE *Spiral Galaxy, Potions & Flux Bikes*, and CC Crain open. 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western. 21+ [FREE](#)

There was no way that Sick Gazelle weren't going to be good. This trio of recording engineer and Veloce

mastermind Eric Block on guitar, Yakuza and Bloodiest front man Bruce Lamont on saxophone, and Sonic Youth's Steve Shelley on drums could've ventured down practically any musical path imaginable, and any one of them would've been exciting—not least because Shelley has made a career of holding everything in place in the midst of musical chaos. For their new debut full-length, *Odum* (out on Lamont's imprint War Crime Recordings), they've chosen a smooth, warm, and beautiful postrock direction, and it came as a complete—yet pleasant—surprise to me. Lamont is known for his spazzy, harsh, dissonant playing and madman stage presence, but against the rhythmic base of Block's beautiful drones and Shelley's signature poker-face drums, he's able to try something completely different, tempering his wildest tendencies into something both haunting and serene. The album's four completely improvised songs give a tip of the hat to groups such as Tortoise and Talk Talk with their sprawling arrangements, sparse melodies, and rich sonic tapestries. And though these three experts in heady sounds could easily incorporate challenging free jazz or brain-melting noise rock, they've kept everything entirely uplifting and pretty. This show celebrates the *Odum*'s release. —LUCA CIMARUSTI

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ROBBIE FULKS @ THE HIDEOUT 8/9

BOUNCING SOULS @ METRO 8/17

SPONGE @ ELBO ROOM 8/23

WOLF EYES @ EMPTY BOTTLE 9/19

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THE SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC

PIVOTAL CHICAGO MUSICIANS THAT SOMEHOW HAVE NOT GOTTEN THEIR JUST DUES by PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE



Barbara Acklin

BARBARA ACKLIN HAD BIG SOUL HITS, BUT WAS NEVER AS WELL-KNOWN AS CONTEMPORARIES DIONNE WARWICK OR BRENDA HOLLOWAY. ACKLIN WAS BORN IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, ON FEBRUARY 28, 1943, AND AFTER HER FAMILY MOVED TO CHICAGO WHEN SHE WAS 5, SHE SANG IN THE CHOIR AT BIG ZION BAPTIST CHURCH. SHE ATTENDED DUNBAR VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL WHILE MOONLIGHTING IN NIGHTCLUBS, AND AFTER GRADUATING, SHE BECAME A SECRETARY AT ST. LAWRENCE RECORDS, WORKING FOR HER COUSIN MONK HIGGINS. HIGGINS CUT A 1966 SINGLE WITH ACKLIN (UNDER THE PSEUDONYM BARBARA ALLEN) FOR HIS LABEL SPECIAL AGENT, AND ALSO PLACED HER ON CHES RECORDS SESSIONS AS A BACKGROUND SINGER. THAT SAME YEAR ACKLIN STARTED AS A RECEPTIONIST FOR PRODUCER CARL DAVIS AT BRUNSWICK RECORDS. ACKLIN SUBMITTED A TUNE SHE'D COWROTTEN, "WHISPERS GETTIN' LOUDER," TO BRUNSWICK ARTIST JACKIE WILSON, AND IN '66 WILSON TURNED IT INTO A #11 HIT. WILSON THEN HELPED ACKLIN GET A BRUNSWICK CONTRACT, AND IN 1968 AN ACKLIN DUET WITH GENE CHANDLER, "SHOW ME THE WAY TO GO," REACHED #30 ON THE R&B

CHARTS. ALSO IN '68, ACKLIN'S CLASSY, SOARING VOICE FOUND THE PERFECT VEHICLE IN HER BIGGEST HIT & SIGNATURE TUNE, "LOVE MAKES A WOMAN." SHE CONTINUED TO CHART & RELEASED A STRING OF ALBUMS FOR BRUNSWICK, AND THE WRITING PARTNERSHIP SHE'D BEGUN IN THE LATE 60S WITH EUGENE RECORD OF THE CHI-LITES CONTINUED TO BEAR FRUIT—NOTABLY WITH MELANCHOLIC EARLY-70S CHI-LITES SMASHES "HAVE YOU SEEN HER?" & "STONED OUT OF MY MIND." ACKLIN LEFT FOR CAPITOL RECORDS IN 1974 BUT NEVER REPEATED HER EARLIER SUCCESS, DESPITE WORKING WITH FORMER BRUNSWICK PRODUCER WILLIE HENDERSON. SHE'D ALL BUT RETIRED FROM RECORDING BY 1980, BUT SHE CONTINUED TO PERFORM, INCLUDING WITH THE CHI-LITES AND AS A SOLO GOSPEL SINGER. IN THE EARLY 90S, MC HAMMER & SWING OUT SISTER RELEASED HIT COVERS OF SONGS SHE'D COWROTTEN OR RECORDED. ACKLIN WAS WORKING ON WHAT WOULD BE HER FIRST ALBUM IN DECADES WHEN SHE DIED FROM PNEUMONIA ON NOVEMBER 27, 1998, IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA.

TUNE INTO THE RADIO VERSION OF "THE SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC" ON "OUTSIDE THE LOOP" ON WGN RADIO 720 AM, SATURDAY AT 6 AM WITH HOST MIKE STEPHEN. pl2sticew@hotmail.com

ARCHIVED @ OUTSIDETHELOOPRADIO.COM [COMMENTS, IDEAS TO pl2sticew@hotmail.com](mailto:pl2sticew@hotmail.com)

TUESDAY23

CAM *Ness Heads and Zealyn* open. 8 PM, House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn, \$30. 17+

Cam's lyrics cut to the core of interpersonal relationships like a breakthrough in a therapy session, perhaps because the California singer-songwriter studied psychology and worked as a researcher before pursuing her country-pop dreams. On her 2017 single "Diane," she gives a voice to the auburn-haired strumpet of Dolly Parton's "Jolene," respond-

ing to the original tune's anguished wife: "I promise I didn't know he was your man / Diane, I would have noticed a gold wedding band." The insight into the inner workings of the human psyche that fuels Cam's songs hasn't gone unnoticed. Miley Cyrus sings Cam's "Maybe You're Right" on her 2013 album, *Bangerz* (a marvelous rendition that allows Cyrus to reclaim a bit of her country soul), and pop/R&B crooner Sam Smith picked Cam as an opener on his 2018 tour. Smith also included a cover of Cam's "Palace" on his 2017 record *The Thrill of It All* (though I prefer Cam's clear but brokenhearted version). Though Cam hasn't put out a new album since



Temple of Angels ALEXIS GROSS

2015's *Untamed* (Arista Nashville), she's kept herself busy touring, writing, and making occasional guest appearances on tracks by other artists—sometimes even blowing them away. Her singing on Diplo's recent single “So Long” reinforces how much I like Cam's voice and how bored I am by Diplo's beats. Last year she released the sparse, lovely country single “Road to Happiness” on her new label, RCA, and I hope its gentle pedal steel and focus on her bright voice are part of the journey Cam takes on future recordings. —SALEM COLLO-JULIN

WEDNESDAY²³

TEMPLE OF ANGELS Civic Center, Sheath, and the Shimmer DJs open. 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, \$10. 21+

Austin quintet Temple of Angels have been flying low under the radar since they dropped their self-titled debut EP in 2017, but they've cut their way out of the undergrowth of a dark postpunk forest to build a following through touring and judicious festival bookings, including SXSW and Austin Terror Fest. Last year's full-length *Foiled* (released on cassette and digitally) shows the young band finding their footing and developing an organic, jagged-but-ethereal sound. Vocalist Bre Morell is a natural fit for the group, with a soaring style that shores up the classic 4AD aesthetic with soulful, metallic power; her bandmates weave a lush, rhythmic nest around her voice that's forceful and full of mystery. On tracks such as “Silver Water,” she rolls out an impish, Siouxsie-like deadpan croon before breaking wide open into a passionate, aching eruption. Temple of Angels just released the seven-inch “Cerise Dream” b/w “Breathless” (which sold out pretty quickly on preorder), a romantic, stormy confection with lovely clatter and swoop. Check out the band now, while you still have time to get in on the ground floor of the beautiful mausoleum they're building. —MONICA KENDRICK

MUSIC

FESTIVALS

One of the festival season's biggest weekends has arrived

ART INSTITUTE BLOCK PARTY

The second annual Art Institute Block Party offers a wide variety of sights, sounds, and perspectives over the course of a single day. Musical performers include local talents Jamila Woods (in a later set, indoors at Rubloff Auditorium, with its own ticket), Mucca Pazza, and Sones de México Ensemble. *Sun 7/21, 10:30 AM-5 PM, Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan, \$25, \$19 for students and seniors, free for children 13 and under. A separate ticket (\$10-\$20) is required for the 7 PM Jamila Woods set.*

COLOMBIAN FEST

Celebrating 200 years of Colombian independence, this family-friendly festival features a cross section of Latinx music, including legendary salsa band Grupo Niche, Dominican bandleader Johnny Ventura, and teenage accordion sensation Albeiro Jose Aguilar—plus sets from a dozen DJs, dance lessons, and more. *Fri 7/19, 4-10 PM, Sat 7/20 and Sun 7/21, noon-10 PM, 4438 W. Wrightwood, \$10-40*

COMPLEXCON CHICAGO

See page 30. *Sat 7/20 and Sun 7/21, 11 AM-8 PM, McCormick Place, 2301 S. King, \$80-\$360*

PITCHFORK MUSIC FESTIVAL

See page 32. *Fri 7/19 through Sun 7/21, 1-10 PM, 1501 W. Randolph, \$95-200*

SILVER ROOM BLOCK PARTY

See page 29. *Sat 7/20, 10 AM-9 PM, 5235 S. Harper and half a dozen nearby storefronts*

2019 UPCOMING SHOWS



Presented by **cricket wireless**

- 7.6** Salute to 80's Rock
w/ Tributes to Def Leppard, Scorpions, Motley Crue & Van Halen
- 7.11** Pouya w/ Ramirez & Boobie Lootaveli
- 7.13** Lyfe Jennings **7.14** Iration w/ Pepper, Fortunate Youth & Katastro
- 7.15** Chase Atlantic w/ Lauren Sanderson **7.23** Cam **7.24** Lights w/ tiLLie
- 7.25** Between Me And My Mind: A Film About Trey Anastasio
- 7.26** Shoeshine Production Presents Obisoulstar w/ JD Revenge & Leonum
- 7.27** Screeching Weasel w/ The Queens and Bigwig
- 8.1** Bring Me To The Horizon **LOW TICKET WARNING**
- 8.2** AJR **LOW TICKET WARNING**
- 8.3** Fuse and Extra Gum Presents Rich The Kid w/ Calboy
- 8.4** Joji **LOW TICKET WARNING**
- 8.8** HELLYEAH w/ Nonpoint
- 8.9** The Faint - Egowerk Tour 2019 w/ Ritual Howls & Closeness
- 8.10** Jonny Lang and JJ Grey & Mofro
- 8.13** Miyavi
- 8.16** SIGMA LXXXV TOUR: The Alarm w/ Modern English & Jay Aston's Gene Loves Jezebel

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EARLY WARNINGS

CHICAGO SHOWS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IN THE WEEKS TO COME

ALL ALL AGES FREE



Dude York ELEANOR PETRY

NEW

Acid King, Wizard Rifle, War-ish 9/25, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

AJR 11/23, 7 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Wed 7/17, 10 AM

Ralph Alessi & This Against That 9/18, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+

Alongside Harold 8/8, 10 PM, American Legion Hall Post 42, Evanston

Omar Apollo 12/5, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall

Axons, Daisy the Great, Bernie & the Wolf 8/21, 8 PM, Schubas

Emily Bear 9/18, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM

Beatdown House's 22nd anniversary LitNic 8/4, 10 AM, Dolton Park, Dolton

Blossoms, Inhaler 11/10, 8:30 PM, Subterranean, 17+

Brutus 10/29, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

Bury Your Dead, Upon a Burning Body, Great American Ghost 9/19, 7 PM, Cobra Lounge, 17+

By Way of Taps: A J Dilla Tribute Created by Nico Rubio 8/25, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 17+

Cae Monae (live), Dzee (live), Club Politix 8/8, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Daniel Caesar 8/12, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre

Callas in Concert: The Hologram Tour 9/7, 7:30 PM, Lyric Opera House

Frank Carter & the Rattlesnakes, Beaches 9/29, 8 PM, Cobra Lounge, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 17+

Cave In, War on Women, 10/10, 8 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 18+

Tyler Childers, Courtney Marie Andrews 10/31, 9 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 17+

Sabrina Claudio, Gallant 10/11, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre

Cold, Awake for Days, University Drive 10/13, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

Peter Collins 8/26, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Crombies, King Hammond, Skapones, Rude Boy George, DJ Chuck Wren 8/23, 8 PM, Reggie's Music Joint

Cuco, Kaina 9/22, 7 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 7/19

Dotan 11/13, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM

Dude York, What Gives 9/8, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

James Duncan, Sean Taylor, Form 8/15, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Duster, Living Hour 9/14, 9 PM, Sleeping Village

Earthless, Maggot Heart, Sacri Monti 10/3, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM

English Beat 9/15, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

Experimental Sound Studio Gala ft. George Lewis/Sam Pluta/Mwata Bowden, Kim Alpert & Rob Mazurek, Ken Vandermark with Claire Rousay & Macie Stewart, Angel Bat Dawid & Douglas R. Ewart, Kotoka Suzuki, and more 8/16, 7 PM, Constellation

Ezra Collective 12/11, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 18+

Fister, Scientist, Sarin, Blunt 8/3, 8 PM, Reggie's Music Joint

Flatlanders 11/10, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Robben Ford 8/23, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 7/19, 9 AM

Ace Frehley, Enuff Z'Nuff 8/1, 7:30 PM, Arcadia Theatre, Saint Charles

Todrick Hall 11/3, 8 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Harm Less, Mother Evergreen, Brady, Options 8/11, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

Hekler, OG Nix 9/13, 8:30 PM, Chop Shop, 18+

Holy Grail, Striker, Bewitcher 7/29, 6 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

J Balvin, Eladio Carrion 9/19, 8 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont

Joji 8/4, 11 PM, House of Blues, 17+

Jvna 12/21, 8:30 PM, Chop Shop, 18+

Kid Rock, Hank Williams Jr. 10/5, 7 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park

Leif Vollebekk 12/6, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 18+

Lone, Rroxy, Hijo Pródigo, Zooey Glass 8/1, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Lotus Kings (tribute to Santana) 9/1, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Maxo Cream, Q da Fool 11/2, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge

Rob Mazurek's Desert Encryptions: Volume 1 8/2, 9 PM; 8/3, 8 PM, Green Mill

Miami Horror 11/22, 9 PM, Park West, 17+

Midnight Hour ft. Ali Shaheed Muhammad & Adrian Younge 10/2, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 17+

Midwest Action Showcase with Brbra Bush, Glad Rags, Ravi/Lola 8/9, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

Mr Twin Sister, Moon King 10/19, 9 PM, Schubas

Neon Indian 11/23, 9 PM, Metro, on sale Fri, 7/19, 10 AM, 18+

Ian Noe, Jeremy Ivey 10/19, 9:30 PM, Sleeping Village

Obisoulstar, Southside Jake, JD's Revenge, Leonum 7/26, 8 PM, House of Blues, 17+

O'Brother, End of the Ocean, Holy Fawn 10/6, 7 PM, Cobra Lounge

Ours 12/1, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Penelope Isles 10/21, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

Prizefighters, Pilfers, J Navarro & the Traitors, Stop the Presses, DJ Chuck Wren 7/26, 8 PM, Reggie's Music Joint

Pure Prairie League 9/4, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Queen! with Cerrone (DJ set), Michael Serafini, Garrett David 10/2, 10 PM, Smart Bar

Railheart 8/9, 10 PM, American Legion Hall Post 42, Evanston

Rezz, Peeekaboo 11/1, 9 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 18+

Rich the Kid, Calboy 8/3, 11 PM, House of Blues, 17+

Riot Ten, Delta Heavy, Vampa, Jessica Audiffred, Sharps 11/29, 9 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+

Riz La Vie 8/23, 7:30 PM, Subterranean

Antonio Sanchez & Migration 10/3, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+

Scarypoolparty (Alejandro Aranda) 8/2, 11 PM, Park West, 18+

Joan Shelley 12/8, 7 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 7/19, 9 AM

Claudio Simonetti's Goblin 10/13, Reggie's Rock Club

Sir Babygirl, Nyssa 10/4, 9 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM

Smells Like Nirvana 9/15, 7 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Willow Smith 7/27, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club

Social Distortion, Flogging Molly, Devil Makes Three, Le Butcherettes 9/7, 6 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion

Split Single 8/10, 10 PM, American Legion Hall Post 42, Evanston

Sugar Candy Mountain 9/5, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM, 17+

1060 Block Party day one with Black Pistol Fire, Local H, Touched by Ghoul, Montrose Man, Bleacher Bum Band, DJ Chuck Wren 8/17, 1 PM, Gallagher Way

1060 Block Party day two with Antibalas, Ted Leo & the Pharmacists, and more 8/18, 1 PM, Gallagher Way

This Will Destroy You 11/19, 9 PM, Sleeping Village, on sale Fri 7/19, noon

Never miss a show again. Sign up for the newsletter at chicagoreader.com/early

Whispers 9/14, 8 PM, Patio Theater

White Wolf Sonic Princess, Ex Maquina 9/4, 7:30 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM

Jonathan Wilson 9/26, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 7/19, 9 AM

Yakuza, Helen Money with Sanford Parker, CJ Boyd 8/10, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

Rachael Yamagata 9/5, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 7/19, 10 AM

Zeds Dead 12/20, 9 PM; 12/21, 9 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 18+

UPDATED

Matt Corby 4/28, 7:30 PM, Metro, date and venue changed; tickets purchased for the 10/9 Park West show will be honored, 18+

Hozier, Angie McMahon 11/3-11/4, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, 11/4 show added

Joey Badass & Flatbush Zombies, Underachievers, Kirk Knight, Nyck Caution, Powers Pleasant, CJ Fly 8/14, 6 PM, Aragon Ballroom, venue changed to Aragon; tickets purchased for Huntington Bank Pavilion will be honored

Lizzo, Ari Lennox 9/28, 8 PM; 9/29, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 9/28 sold out, 9/29 show added, 17+

UB40 ft. Ali & Astro, Shaggy, Steel Pulse 9/18, 6:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom, venue changed; refunds and exchanges available at point of purchase, 17+

UPCOMING Allah-Lahs, Tim Hill 8/16, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

Las Cafeteras 11/22, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Kazu 10/12, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+

Leya, Damiana, 8/14, 9:30 PM, Hideout

Tim O'Brien Band, 9/6, 8 PM, FitzGerald's

Oranssi Pazuzu, Insect Ark 10/10, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

Mike Watt & the Missingmen 10/2, 8 PM, Schubas

Waves 7/28, 9 PM, Subterranean, 17+

Kelly Willis, Bruce Robison 11/2, 10 PM, SPACE, Evanston



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

ONCE UPON a time, before there was a Record Store Day, **Dusty Groove's** morning basement sales were an annual highlight for many an obsessive crate digger. Begun in 2001, the sales have become rarities (the most recent was outdoors on a side street in 2014), but this wolf used to enjoy trying to spot famous musicians waiting patiently with the plebes to sort through the store's marked-down goodies—and is still convinced that Dean Wareham somehow cut the line in 2002. Anyway, from 10 AM till 5 PM on Saturday, July 20, Dusty Groove will load its third-floor space with thousands of **dollar LPs** and **25-cent 45s**—many of them never before offered to the public. Who knows when Dusty Groove will do a sale like this again—that third floor will be leased soon, so it could be another five years. Get there early, and keep your eye on any dude who looks like he was in Galaxie 500!

Gossip Wolf loves a mystery, and has obsessed for years over the dark electronica of anonymous local producer **Faithful**. In an era of oversharing, Faithful's MO of emerging only briefly from the ether with a Soundcloud single, cassette EP, or radio DJ set is refreshing. In May, Faithful dropped a free digital EP, **Timed Imaginations**, on Italian label **Prehistoric Silence**, and it's loaded with anxious, hypnotically beautiful textures and beats. "Cornerz" weaves dissonant chatter—a pitched-up voice, glassy synths, barking sub-bass—into something that feels unsettlingly like waking from a half-remembered dream. Faithful sometimes plugs shows or releases on Twitter at @001FAITHFUL.

Last week, Chicago music and culture podcast **Better Yet** released the compilation album **All of God's Money**, a tribute to **Wilco's Yankee Hotel Foxtrot**. It features some of this wolf's favorite local rock acts, including Meat Wave, Slow Mass, Lifted Bells, and Ratboys. Proceeds benefit the **AIDS Foundation of Chicago**—in its first 48 hours, the comp raised more than \$1,500! —**J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL**

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip_Wolf or e-mail gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com.

OPINION

continued from 45 female partner in an effort to “flood out” his competitor’s semen. For a time, many sex researchers theorized that male swingers and cuckolds were subconsciously inducing “sperm competition” reactions.

“Unfortunately, much of the research into sperm competition is now suspect, due to a failure to replicate many of these findings,” said Ley. “So to a degree, we’re now saying, ‘You know, it’s complicated, everyone is different, and there are no simple answers.’”

“Many cuckolds have a desire to engage bisexually with other men, using their wife’s body as a sort of proxy,” said Ley. “Given that FREED is a bi male in a heterosexual relationship, these cuckold fantasies might be a way for him to express his bisexuality while including his wife. Additionally, vicarious erotic fulfillment is often a central component in many cuckold fantasies. This goes beyond simple voyeurism—and FREED’s comment about his wife’s regret at not having enough sexual experiences to share offers us a clue in this direction. Many cuckolds celebrate their partners being sexually unrestrained. FREED might just be turned on by the idea of his wife cutting loose and sharing that supercharged erotic energy with other partners—past, present, and future.”

The erotic power of doing something that seems antithetical to the heteronormative and/or vanilla-normative expectations heaped on us by culture, religion, family, etc, should never be underestimated. While not everyone is turned on by the thought of transgressing against sexual or social norms, a significant percentage is. So long as our normative-busting transgressive turn-ons can be realized with other con-

senting adults, we should worry less about the “why,” and more about the “when,” “where,” and “how.” (Now, in private, and safely!)

Q: I'm a 35-year-old married man with two beautiful small children. I knew I was a cuckold before I met my wife. As soon as things got somewhat serious, I made this very clear, as I had learned repeatedly that my desire for a cuckold relationship almost certainly spelled doom. While we were dating, she cuckolded me multiple times and seemed very accepting of the idea. I was in heaven, as I finally felt accepted for me. I remember on the day of our elopement discussing that this was more than a kink for me—it was central to my sexuality and I needed her buy-in before committing for life. We played a time or two after we got married, but my wife's interest in the lifestyle decreased. After we had children (first child four years ago), her interest in cuckolding evaporated. It's entirely gone. I accepted this for some time due to having young children. She recently expressed legitimate concerns around STIs, pregnancy, and being “found out” by friends/family. But this is something I need, as I made clear before we married. It's not just a “kink” for me. I love my wife and I don't want to pressure her into having sex with others, but I'm hurt and frustrated. I can't help but feel like I had a bait and switch pulled on me. What do I do? —**CUCKOLD HAS UNDERSTANDABLE REGRETS NOW**

A: Cuckolding may be something you need, CHURN, but it's something you're asking the wife to do. And the doing presents more risks for her—the

risks of STIs and pregnancy fall entirely on her, as she pointed out. And if people were to find out (or suspect) she was sleeping around, the “shame” and potential social ostracism would fall entirely on her too. Even if you were to tell anyone who found out that it was consensual and/or that you were a cuckold, it's not like she wouldn't still be shamed or ostracized. Judgmental family and friends would just heap equal portions of shame on you too.

To your credit, you told her before you eloped that you needed this to be happy, and she didn't just agree to it, she was enthused about it. I might be inclined to see this as a bait and switch myself if you didn't have children. Even the most adventurous people—sexual or otherwise—tend to become risk-averse when their children are young, and I imagine your wife is currently some combo of highly risk-averse and completely overwhelmed. Instead of threatening to divorce her, I would encourage you to find a sex-positive counselor who can help you two talk about what your sex life can look like once your children are a little older.

My hunch is your wife can see cuckolding you again then. Since finding women who are into this isn't easy, as you already know, it would be in your own self-interest to take the long view and be patient. In the meantime, CHURN, content yourself with hot memories of all the times your wife cuckolded you in the past and hot dirty talk about all the times she's going to cuckold you in the future. 

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Date: 02/05/2019 STATE OF MINNESOTA Shelly-Linette Goss do 9838 South Merrill Avenue Chicago, Illinois (60617) INITIAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FILE NUMBER 1045091000048 CONTINUATION Effectiveness of the Financing Statement identified above with respect to the security interest(s) of Secured Party authorizing this Continuation Statement is continued for the additional period provided by applicable law PARTY INFORMATION CHANGE: Debtor ADD name ORGANIZATION'S NAME IMPERIAL VALLEY PROPERTIES, LLC CHANGED OR ADDED INFORMATION IMPERIAL VALLEY PROPERTIES, LLC 375 E. COMMERCIAL AVENUE, EL CENTRO CA 92243 USA COLLATERAL CHANGE/ADD COLLATERAL Debtor arises out of want of consideration. In Lieu of consideration Secured Party consents and pledges recoupment of any and all losses incurred by debtor by granting debtor priority lien on account (including, but not limited to any and all off balance sheet ledgering), orders, bonds, insurance, reinsurance, securities, instruments, transfer orders, products, fixtures, chattel paper, debt obligations and any other hypothecated real or personal property

emanating from the existing (Non-Fictional) and Tangible real estate property located at the physical address of, 3838 South Merrill Avenue, Chicago Illinois, 60617 and physical land that said property rests upon as described in the Land Spec of Name or SECURED PARTY OF RECORD AUTHORIZING THIS AMENDMENT Goss, Shelly Linette THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF COOK IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, TO WHIT: LOT 86 IN JEFFERY MANOR, BEING A RESUBDIVISION OF PART OF BLOCK 1, ALL OF BLOCKS 2 TO 10 BOTH INCLUSIVE, AND PART OF BLOCK 11 INCLUDING VACATED ALLEYS AND VACATED PARTS TO SOUTH CLYDE AVENUE, SOUTH PAXTON AVENUE, EAST 96TH STREET, EAST 96TH PLACE, EAST 97TH STREET, EAST 97TH PLACE, EAST 98TH STREET, EAST 98TH PLACE, ALL IN HUGH MCGINNIS 95TH STREET SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST 1/2 OF THE WEST 1/2 OF THE NORTH EAST 1/4 SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 37 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED NOVEMBER 10, 1942 AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 12987496, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS. TAX MAP OR PARCEL ID NO.: 25-12-217-097 COMMONLY KNOWN AS 9838 S MERRILL AVE, CHICAGO,

IL 60617 THIS FINANCING STATEMENT AMENDMENT COVERS TIMBER TO BE CUT (07/18)

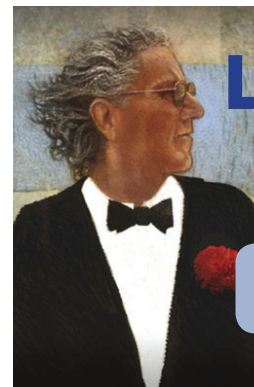
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Filing Number: 1042139900032 Date: 10/29/2018 STATE OF MINNESOTA Linell Elena: Leach c/o 9838 South Merrill Avenue Chicago, Illinois (60617) near (cf.60617cf.) Non-Domestic Without the U.S. ORGANIZATION NAME: LINELL ELENA LEACH, CESTUI QUE TRUST/TRADE NAME/ TRADEMARK-DEBTOR 9838 SOUTH MERRILL AVENUE, CHICAGO, IL 60617 U.S ORGANIZATION NAME: LINELL ELENA LEACH, ORGANIZATION/ TRADE NAME/ TRADE MARK-DEBTOR 9838 SOUTH MERRILL AVENUE, CHICAGO, IL 60617 U.S SECURED PARTY'S NAME: Leach, Linell Elena 9838 South Merrill Avenue, Chicago, IL 60617 U.S COLLATERAL: This financing statement covers the following collateral The following is herewith registered in the Commercial Registry: The Debtor and Secured Party's property as follows; BIRTH CERTIFICATE as Recorded by the COUNTY OF COOK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK, DAVID ORR, Date filed, May 18, 1954. CERTIFICATE No. 112-54-635216:

SECURITY AGREEMENT No. LL 201804-SA: LL-POWER OF ATTORNEY No.:LL-201803 POA: HOLDS HARMLESS INDEMNITY AGREEMENT NO. LL 2018BHIA: COMMON LAW COPYRIGHT No.:LL-201802 CLC: DESCRIPTION OF OWNER'S PROPERTY: PARCEL 1: UNIT 105 IN THE RENAISSANCE PLACE AT HYDE PARK CONDOMINIUM AS DECLINED ON A SURVEY OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED REAL ESTATE: A PORTION OF LOT 29 IN RENAISSANCE PLACE HYDE PARK SUBDIVISION BEING A SUBDIVISION IN EGANDALE, A SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST 118 ACRES OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION OF SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 38 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, WHICH SURVEY IS ATTACHED "C" TO THE DECLARATION OF CONDOMINIUM RECORDED AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 0009447 AS AMENDED AND SUPPLEMENTED FROM TIME TO TIME. TOGETHER WITH ITS UNDIVIDED PERCENTAGE INTEREST IN THE COMMON ELEMENTS, ALL IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. -- C73207908/ Cert.# 5391063; EXEMPTION IDENTIFICATION No. - and all Debtor's assets. All property is 'Accepted for Value', and is Exempt From Levy. A Debtor is a Transmitting Utility ALTERNATIVE DESIGNATION

(if applicable) Bailee/Bailor ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR (ITEM 4 Collateral): All property, proceeds products, accounts, baggage, effects fixtures, sureties, bonds, orders, titles, and interests therein, is released to the Debtor. Adjustments of this filing id from HJR - 192 of June 5, 1933, and UCC 1-104, 10-104, and 3-419. The orders therefrom are hereby released to the Debtor, to include all signature, endorsements, facsimiles, copyrights, printed, typed, or photocopies of Record Owner's Name and Title. Record Owner is not Grantor to any other accounts by explicit reservation without prejudice, UCC 1-308. Total value of instruments in this filing FIFTY MILLION UNITED STATES DOLLARS (50,000,000.00 USD). All of Debtor's interest in said as sets, land and personal property now owned and hereafter acquired, now existing, and hereafter arising, and wherever located in (5A), Dated the Twenty Fifth day of October, in the year of our Creator, Yahweh, Two Thousand Eighteen (07/18)

Balancing Point Center for Wellness 4753 N. Broadway St, STE 101 Chicago, IL 60640. As of 8/17/2019, Balancing Point Center for Wellness will close due to the relocation of Dr.Kristina Chung. After August 31, 2019, medical records can be obtained by contacting our custodian of records, please

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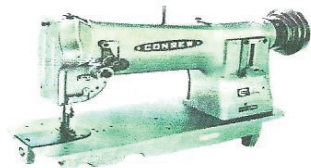
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